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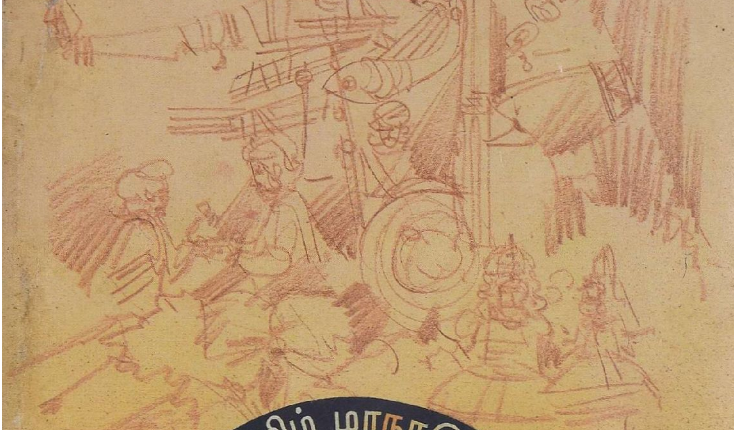
PLENARY SESSION PAPERS



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யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர் !

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INDIAN COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL SOUTHEAST ASIA

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Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to deliver the keynote lecture at this Eighth International Conference-Seminar of Tamil Studies being held at Tamil University in Thanjavur, the ancient capital of the glorious Chola Dynasty. This Conference-Seminar has as its main theme "Contribution of Tamil Culture to the Twenty-First Century", and in consideration of this theme, I have decided to speak today about the Indian commercial activities in ancient and medieval Southeast Asia as revealed from Tamil inscriptions. I believe that the most important contribution that may be expected from the Tamil people to the twenty-first century should lie in the field of cooperation with other peoples in order to bring about the interreliance and harmony of all of the world's peoples. The spirit of cooperation and interreliance was certainly a significant part of the Tamil cultural tradition.

The recognition of this spirit is important to peoples everywhere. During the twentieth century, each of the world's peoples strived to develop their own society and culture, and many of them including the Tamil people have succeeded in achieving their goals. However, the specific goals were sometimes achieved by each people pursuing its own interests without thinking of the others. And therefore, the next century, we believe, should be the period during which all peoples will cooperate with each other to create global harmony. That can be realized only through the spirit of cooperation and interreliance, and I hope that my lecture today will remind us all of the importance of this spirit seen in the Tamil cultural tradition.

Before starting on the topic of the Indian commercial activities, however, let me reflect for a moment on the past studies of Southeast Asian ancient and medieval history. Before World War II, one of the most important and attractive topics in these studies was the "Indianization" of Southeast Asian societies.

European scholars like G. Coedes and N.J. Krom argued that the Indian culture brought into Southeast Asia facilitated the state formation there, and Indian scholars like R.C. Majumdar and Nilakanta Sastri supported their arguements by providing more evidence.

World War II, however, interrupted the studies, and after India and Southeast Asian countries had attained their Independence, an entirely different situtation arose. In each country, the study of its own past developed rapidly and many new archaeological discoveries were also made, and, more importantly, Southeast Asian historians began to be inclined to explain the state formation in a different way, namely, as the process of the spontaneous development of society independent from Indianization. Comparing to the past studies which overemphasized the aspect of "Indianization" by employing even the expressions such as "Indian colony" or "greater India", this new tendency appearing in Southeast Asian countries is to be appreciated as being more natural and healthy, provided it does not go to the opposite extreme.

In India, as well, much development has been made since its Independence on the study of ancient Indian history. However, scholars in India and Southeast Asia have remained mutually ignorant of the research development made in the other region, as the point of viewing both regions from one angle, such as from the concept of Indianization, has been lost. Although we have to reinterpret the relations between India and Southeast Asia by re-examining the so-called Indianization process, the fact that Indian culture found its way into Southest Asia remains undisputed. Nobody will deny, therefore, the importance of collaboration of Indian scholars and Southeast Asian scholars in this work of re-interpretation.

With this belief in mind, I organised five years ago an international research project on the reinterpretation of relations between South Asia and Southeast Asia in the ancient and medieval periods [1] and took four Indian scholars to Southeast Asian countries in pursuance of this project. They are specialist in South Indian archaeology, epigraphy and history. Some Japanese specialists also joined us [2] together with Southeast Asian scholars. In the winter of 1991-92 we visited Vietnam and Laos, in

1992-93 Malaysia and Thailand, and in 1993-94 Indonesia. In each country, with the permission of the respective government, we were able to visit important sites and museums and to have useful discussions on many problems with the native scholars who had been carrying out the studies. [3]

In this lecture I will present to you some of the achievements of our study in this project, especially regarding the interpretation of Tamil inscriptions which we examined in some places.

1. Tamil Inscriptions in Southeast Asia

Oc-Eo in the Mekong delta in Vietnam is famous as an international port of early times, its origin going back to the beginning of the Christian era. Some Roman coins and a Han Chinese bronze mirror were discovered in Oc-Eo and its vicinity in the delta, together with beads and other ornaments and religious objects. Those objects are also found in many other sites in Southeast Asia, particularly in the Malay peninsula, and also in India, especially in the south.

The Sangam Tamil classics and the Greek and Roman literature of the early Chiristian era provide us with the names of some ancient ports flourshing on the coasts of South India. Arikamedu in the neighbourhood of Pondicherry was one such port being described by Greek writers as Podūkē. It was also a manufacturing centre of beaos and other similar stone and metal objects, which connect India with Southeast Asia[4]. There is no doubt that some of these objects discovered in Southeast Asia were brought from Arikamedu and other places on the Indian coast, but some others must have been produced locally, though we do not have much evidence for that.

One of the Tamil inscriptions we examined concerns this point. The inscription referred to is preserved in the temple museum of Wat Khlong Thom, Krabi Province, Southern Thailand. Eight Tamil Brahmi letters are inscribed on one side of a small flat rectangular stone (3cm X 7cm X 0.7cm) and read *perumpatan Kal* meaning "(This is) the (touch) stone of Perumpatan". *Perum* means big, *patan (pattan)* means goldsmith, and therefore Perumpatan is either the title or the name of a goldsmith who possessed this touch-stone. This is the first Tamil inscription of

Brahmi script from the third or fourth century A.D. found in Southeast Asia.

This stone certainly indicates the migration of a Tamil goldsmith from South India. The place where this stone was discovered is famous for yielding a large number of beads and similar objects and is locally called "bead mound" (Khuan Luk Pat). In the above museum are displayed a number of beads and precious stone ornaments inscribed with north Indian Brahmi script, and also some moulds for making those objects. This place, therefore, seems to have been an important centre for manufacturing them and some Indians were included among the artisans.

Indians seem to have continually crossed the sea to migrate to or visit Southeast Asia, and we have many Sanskrit inscriptions as well as Buddhist and Hindu sculptures relating to this in the post-fifth century Southeast Asia. Records of Chinese pilgrims who crossed the sea as well as the old Malay and Javanese inscriptions of the seventh century testify to the increasing Indian cultural influence. However, we do not have any Tamil inscription from the fifth to the eighth centuries. [5] Our next Tamil inscription comes from Takua Pa, north of Krabi, in the Malay peninsula.

Takua Pa is usually believed to have been the ancient Takkōla mentioned by Ptolemy, though it did not yield beads and other objects similar to those found in Arikamedu and Krabi. Instead, the site in Takua Pa has yielded some art objects belonging to the ninth and tenth centuries. [6] The stone bearing the so-called Takua Pa inscription, now preserved in the Nakhon-Si-Tammarat Museum, is said to have been originally discovered in Kho Khao island together with a stone Vishnu and other statues of South Indian Pallava style. The text of this Tamil inscription was published with a facsimile of the estampage by Nilakanta Sastri, Professor of History, University of Madras. [7] The stone has undergone further damage since that estampage was taken, and some of the letters he read or suggested have gone for ever. However, as there is no substantial difference in our reading of the remaining portion, we may depend on the reading given by Nilakanta Sastri.

This inscription seems to record that a tank was constructed by somebody and put under the protection of *maṇigirāmattār, sēnāmugattār* and another similar body. *Manigiramam* is a famous merchant guild which flourished in Tamil Nadu and Kerala in India from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries. [8] We have many inscriptions referring to their activities in those areas. To the contrary,we have never come across *sēnāmugam* in South Indian Tamil inscriptions, but there are a few Javanese inscriptions referring to this body. [9] As this term is found in the enumeration of the terms indicating professional groups such as *hunjamman* (*añjuvaṇṇam* in Tamil inscriptions) and others, we may take it as a merchant community or perhaps their associates such as *vīrak koḍiyār* in Tamil inscrptions, who worked for the merchants as armed guardsmen. This inscription gives a clear evidence of Tamil merchant activities carried out in Southeast Asia. Nilakanta Sastri suggested the reading of the tank's name as Sri Avaninārāṇam. If this is the case, the Pallava connection of this inscription may be acceptable, as Avaninaranam is an epithet of Nandivarman III, the Pallava king (AD 846-869). Even otherwise, the date of the inscription can safely be fixed palaeographically in the ninth century.

Chronologically the next Tamil inscription we have examined comes from Barus in north-western Sumatra. The stone was discovered about 1890 in Lubo Tuo (Loboe Toewa) near Barus (Baros), and the estampage was examined by E. Hultzsch, Government Epigraphist of the Madras Presidency, who reported it briefly in *Madras Epigraphy Report* 1891-92. Nilakanta Sastri discussed the problem of the *ainnūṟṟuvar* (five hundred) mentioned in the inscription by exmining several South Indian inscriptions referring to it. [10] As he pointed out for the first time in his article, *ainnūṟṟuvar* is another merchant guild that flourished in South India from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries. [11] This big corporate body of merchants that originated in Aihole in Karnataka in the eighth century or so seems to have extended its activities afterwards to Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, incorporating many other merchant bodies under its banner. It also seems to have kept some groups of soldiers for protection of their commercial activities.

Though Nilakanta Sastri made a fine study of *ainnūṟṟuvar* in his article, he could not read the text of the Barus inscription, as it was not given by Hultzsch in his report. Hultzsch reported it as much mutilated and gave only the date of the inscription (Śaka 1010 = AD 1088) and a brief comment on the contents that "it records a gift by a body of persons who are styled <one thousand-five-hundred>". Hultzsch's report was the source for Nilakanta Sastri and has remained the only source for scholars for more than a century. To our surprise, we saw the stone containing the inscription almost intact in the National Museum in Jakarta in January 1994. Permission was granted to us for taking estampages,[12] and the following is the text and translation tentatively made by Professor Y. Subbarayalu of Tamil University, one of the members of my project mentioned above.

Text

1. svasti śrī śakarai
2. āṇḍu āyirattup pa-
3. ttuc cellā nin
4. ṟa māsit tiṅgaḷ
5. vārōsāna mātan
6. gari vallavat tēsi u-
7. yya koṇḍa paṭ
8. ṭinattu vēḷāpurattu
9. kūḍi niranda dēsi[t tisai]
10. viḷaṅgu disai āyira
11. t tainnūṟṟuvarō
12. m nammaganār nagara sēnāpa
13. pati nāṭṭuceṭṭi-
14. yārkkum patineṇbhūmi
15. dēsi apparkku mā[ve]t-
16. tugaḷukkum nā vaittuk -

17. kuḍutta parisāvadu [ma]rak-

18. ... ...

19. 1 marakkala nāyaṉun kēvi-

20. galum kastu[ri] vilai mu[talagappada]

21. añju tuṇ[ḍā]yam poṉṉum kuḍu-

22. ttu pāvāḍai ēṟakkaḍavadāgavum

23. ippaḍikku [i]kka[l] eḻudi nāṭṭi-

24. k kuḍuttōm patineṇbūmi dēsit tisai viḷa-

25. ṅgu disai āyirattainnuvṟṟuvarōm a-

26. ṟamaraveṟka aṟamēy tunai.

Translation

(11. 1-4) In the Śaka year 1010 current, month Māsi,

(11. 5-11) We, the Five Hundred of the Thousand Directions known in all countries and directions, having met at Vēḷāpuram in Vārōsu *alias* Mātaṅgari vallava-dēsi-uyyakkoṇḍa-paṭṭinam

(11. 12-17) decided to grant as follows to "our sons", the *nagara-sēnāpati* Nāṭṭu-ceṭṭiyār, to Patineṇ-būmi-desi-appar and to the *māvettugaḷ:*

(11. 17-22) [Each of] the ship's . . ., ship's Captain and the *kēvigal* shall pay the fee *añju-tuṇḍāyam* in gold according to the price of the *kastūri* and [then only] may step on the "cloth spread". [13]

(11. 23-26) Thus we the Five Hundred of the Thousand Directions known in every direction in all the Eighteen Lands got this stone inscription written and planted. Do not forget the charity; Charity alone will help you.

This text confirms the date and the brief contents given by Hultzsch in his report, though his reading of the name of the merchant body as "1500" should be corrected to "500" as Nilakanta Sastri suggested. However, it gives us some other new information also. Not only Barus is mentioned in the inscription as Vārōsu, it also had another name in Tamil, namely,Mātaṅgari-vallava-dēsi- uyyakkoṇḍa-paṭṭinam (literally, Paṭṭinam for the

welfare of the merchant body blessed by Siva). The suffix paṭṭinam indicates that Vārōsu was a commercial town. It seems to have comprised a suburb called Vēḷāpuram in which the merchant body assembled to make a decision. Vēḷāpuram seems to have stood for the port area, [14] and the decision made by the *ainnūṟṟuvar* members was to grant some monetary contribution to two individuals and *mavettugaḷ*, all of whom are called "our sons". [15] The money should be raised as a proportion of revenue (añju-tuṇḍāyam) from the ship's owners (?), ship's captains (marak kala-nāyan) and boat rowers (kēvigaḷ). Marakkala-nāyan seems to relate to the term marakkāyar used to denote the seafaring Muslim merchants of the Tamil Nadu and Kerala coasts in the later period. [16] Anyway, this reference may be taken as direct evidence for the existence of Tamil merchant shipping. Though *Kastūri* meaning musk appears in many records as an important commodity, it is not so clear why it is selected as the item for fixing the rate of the fee *(añju-tuṇḍāyam).* Barus was famous for exporting camphor.

The name of Vēḷāpuram also interests us, as it appears in the eulogy *(praśasti)* to *ainnūṟṟuvar* in several inscriptions. Most of them state that their people have been carrying on business in 18 *paṭṭinam* (or paṭṭanam), 32 *vēḷāpuram* and 64 kaḍigai-tāvaḷam. [17] Though the numbers 18, 32 and 64 are of course fictitious, we know some *pattinams* which were actually related to *ainnuṟṟūvars*, like *Koḍumbalūr* alias *Kulōttuṅgachōḷa-paṭṭinam,*[18] *Kulasēkhara paṭṭinam,*[19] etc. However, the actual existence of *velapuram* has never been empirically confirmed so far, and this *Vēḷāpuram* in Vārōsu is the first attested example.

As mentioned earlier, there are many inscriptions in South India recording the activities of *ainnuṟṟūvar*, and in Sri Lanka also we have six such inscriptions. The findspots are rather scattered throughout the northern and central parts of the island. Professor Veluppillai who published the texts [20] was able to see only the photographs of estampages and therefore had great difficulty in his work of decipherment, leaving much ambiguity in the reading. However, all of them seem to belong to the eleventh century and concern *ainnūṟṟuvar*, particularly the *vīrakkoḍiyār* who were employed as guards of the *ainnūṟṟuvar* merchants. Three of the six inscriptions seem to record the decision made by the

virakkodiyar (and also by the *nattu-cettigal* jointly?) against misappropriating the collection of certain dues or fees within the towns under their protection.

There are two more so far unnoticed Tamil inscriptions which were examined by us. Though they have no direct connection with commerce, their observation may not be much of a deviation from our topic. One inscription comes from Nakhon Si Thammarat in Thailand in the middle part of the Malay peninsula. The stone bearing the inscription is preserved in a Buddhist temple (Wat Brahma That) and we were not allowed by the temple authority to take estampages or photographs. However, from our observation on the spot and our study of a photograph of the estampage probably taken by the Archaeology Department and displayed in the Nakhon Si Thammarat Museum, we were able to understand the following. The date is either 1183 or 1283. No king seems to have been mentioned. It records that one Danma Sēnāpati made a grant to Brahmanas in three shares. The stone is damaged and imprecatory sentences occupy nearly a half of the remaining part of the inscription. The donor, Danma Sēnāpati, may have been a merchant, but it is not verifiable.

The other one is found in the National Museum in Jakarta. It is on a strangely shaped standing stone like a dance scuplture (height 130cm), the top of which is sculpted with the head of Ganesa. The location of the find is not ascertainable. [21] The inscription consists of two parts, one in Tamil and the other in Old Javanese. Both are badly worn out, but seem to convey the same contents. [22] It seems to record that some "sēnāpati rakan dīpaṅkara" made a charitable deed for the merit of the king named as "peritu sri maharaja" ("paduka sri maharaca" in Javanese). Dipankara is the name of a past Buddha and implies his Buddhist identity. *Rakan* is an Indonesian title given to a big person, and *sēnāpati* in this case seems to have been an army commander or general. The fact that the charity was made for the merit of the king also suggests that the donor was an influential personsage. However, the reason why this inscription was written in Tamil is also unclear. Dīpaṅkara might have been a Tamil. The date calculated from the astronomical data given in the inscription corresponds to AD 1187, 1258 or 1265, but palaeographically the last two are more probable, namely in the latter half of the thirteenth century.

The last inscription coming from Pagan in Myanmar is related to commerce. Though we have still had no occasion to examine this inscription *in istu*, it is published in *Epigraphia Indica*.[23] The stone is well preserved and the text is complete. Though the date is not given, Hultzsch assigned it to the thirteenth century. In the first half of the inscription a Vaishnavite *mantra* for righteous conduct is given in Sanskrit. The latter half records in Tamil the construction of a front hall in a Vishnu temple and the installation of a door and a lamp into that hall by Irāyiran Siṟiyan alias Sri Kulaśekhara Nambi of Magōdayapaṭṭanam in Malaimaṇḍalam. The temple in which the hall was constructed is called Nanadesi-viṇṇagar (Vishnu temple of *nānādēsi*). The name indicates the presence of the merchant guild called *nanadesi*, the name which was often synonymously employed by the *ainnūṟṟuvar*. Magōdayapaṭṭinam from which the donor came is obviously the famous Chera capital Mahōdayapuram in Kerala (Malaimaṇḍalam).

The above examination of six Tamil inscriptions discovered in Southeast Asia reveal the activities of Tamil merchants organised in corporate bodies such as *maṇigirāmam, ainnūṟṟuvar* and *nānādēsi*. One of the conspicuous features of the activities of those merchant bodies is their noncommitment to any political power. Most of the *ainnūṟṟuvar* inscriptions in South India and Sri lanka have their own eulogy, instead of that to king. For the protection of their property and life, they had their own soldiers. Anyway, this non-political character of their organisation must have enabled them to conduct their overseas trade for centuries and to secure their fame.

2. Srivijaya/Kaḍāram/San-fo-ch'i Problem

Without referring to the Srivijaya/Kaḍāram/San-fo-ch'i problem, [24] any account of the activities carried out by South Indian merchants in madieval Southeast Asia may not be complete. However, without going into the problem so much in detail, I should like to show you here the view obtainable from the South Indian side. In this relation, Nagapattinam, the famous medieval port on the Coromandel coast, plays an important role. It is well known that Chūḷāmaṇivarman, the king of Srivijaya/Kaḍāram, estabilshed a Buddhist temple (paḷḷi) in Nagapattinam, for the maintenance of which Rajaraja I, the then Chola king, granted a village in his 21st regnal year (AD 1006). This is recorded in the

so-called Larger Leiden copper plates.[25] Though Chūḷāmaṇivarman is mentioned only as the king of kaḍāram (Kiḍāram) in the Tamil portion of the plates, his son Māṟa-Vijayōttuṅgavarman appearing in the Sanskrit portion, which was added later in the time of Rajendra I,[26] son and successor of Rajaraja I, is said to have been born in the Śailendra family and to be the king of Srivijaya ruling in Kaṭāha. There is no doubt about the identity of these three terms, namely Kaḍāram, Kiḍāram and Kaṭāha, though their identification with Kedah in the Malay peninsula is uncertain. Before entering into the problem of the identification of kaḍāram and also into that of its relation with Srivijaya and San-fo-ch'i, I wish to attract your attention to three Tamil stone inscriptions discovered in Nagapattinam in the 1950s and also to one Tamil inscription on the pedestal of a bronze Buddha statue orginally beloging to Nagapattinam.

The texts of the first three inscriptions have not yet been published, but we were able to check their estampages and transcripts preserved in the office of the Director of Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore.[27] The first inscription (No. 161 of *AR* 1956/57) records that during the reign of Rajendra I (the year was lost due to damage to the stone) Sri Mulan Agattisuvaran, an agent (*Kanmi*) of the Srivjaya king, donated several lampstands to be installed into the door of a Siva temple in Nagapattinam.

The second one (No. 164 of *AR* 1956/57) records that in the 3rd year of Rajendra I (AD 1015) another agent (*Kanmi*) of the Srivijaya king donated some ornaments to the same temple in Nagapattinam. A *makara,* which is the emblem of Māṟa-Vijayōttuṅgavarman according to the Larger Leiden plates, seems to have been fixed in the centre of the ornament.

The third one (No. 166 of *AR* 1956/57) records that in the 7th (?) year of Rajendra I (AD 1019?) Sri Kurundan Kesuvan alias Agralekai, an agent (*Kanmi*) of the Kiḍāram king, donated two pieces of gold called chīnakanagam (Chinese gold) for worship and feeding in the same temple in Nagapattinam. He also donated some other gold pieces to offer food to the deity and to feed Brahmanas.

While the first two inscriptions refer to the Srivijaya king, the last one refers to the Kiḍāram king. However, the dates of

these inscriptions are close to each other and if we consider the synonymous usage of Srivijaya and Kiḍāram in the Larger Leiden plates, we may safely infer that Srivijaya and Kidaram are again synonymous in these inscriptions. The agent of the second inscription (name lost) seems to have been a Tamilian, as he is said to belong to a town in Kīḻ-chembināḍu (in Ramnad District) in Tamilnadu. The names of the other two agents also sound like Tamilian or Keralite names.

From the above four inscriptions, therefore, we know that friendly relations existed between Kaḍāram and the Chola country in the beginning of the eleventh century continuing at least until AD 1015 or 1019. Soon after, however, the famous attack on Kaḍāram by Rajendra I took place sometime around 1026. This is recorded in many inscriptions of the 14th year and after of Rajendra I [28] Some of them [29] give us details of the expedition by mentioning the places he conquered such as Srivijaya, Paṇṇai, Malaiyūr, Māyiruḍingam, Ilaṅgāsōka, Māpappālam, Mēvilimbaṅgam, Vaḷaippandūru, Talaittakkōlam, Tāmruliṅga, Ilāmuri-dēsam, Nakkavāram and Kaḍāram. The king of kaḍāram who was defeated and captured was Sangrāma-Vijayōttuṅgavarman, possibly son and successor of Māṟa-Vijayōttuṅgavarman of the Larger Leiden plates. Many suggestions have been made for the identification of these conquered places.[30] Though some of them still defy identification, these places seem to have been scattered in a wide area of the Malay peninsula and Sumatra. Though there is no positive evidence for doing so, I doubt that the Chola navy conquered all these places. The area is too vast to be conquered in one expedition. These places seem to represent just the area which was under the control of the kings who claimed the Srivijayan kingship and not the actually conquered places. However, the conquest of kaḍāram must have taken place, since the name of the captured Kaḍāram king is mentioned.

The Chola navy seems to have crossed the Bengal bay again some time around AD 1068 during the reign of Vīrarājēndra, as inscriptions of his seventh regnal year (AD 1069/70) mention of his expedition to Kaḍāram, [31] though there is no vivid description of the battle in any of them. The purpose this time was to save a suppliant Kaḍāram king (name unknown) from his difficulty.

Just more than twenty years after this second expedition, another Kaḍāram king (name unknown) sent a mission to the Chola court in 1090 and requested Kulottuṅga I, the then Chola king, to confirm the grant of villages made previously to the Buddhist temple constructed in Nagapattinam by Chūḷāmaṇi- varman. This is recorded in the so-called Smaller Leiden plates. [32] All these events, together with the presence of agents (*kanmi*) of the kaḍāram king in the Chola country, suggest the existence of very close relations between the two countries, even though the Chola navy once sacked the capital of the other country.

Here, I should like to introduce another Tamil inscription related to Nagapattinam. It is a short (two lines) inscription engraved on the pedestal of a bronze buddha image of the Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd collection. [33] The script of the inscription is similar to that of the inscriptions of Kulottuṅga I, allowing us to assign its date around AD 1100. The text runs as follows:

(1. 1) irājēndra-cōḻap perunpaḷḷi akkasālaip perumpaḷḷi āḻvār-kōyilukku tiruvutsavam eḻuntaruḷa āḻvār ivvāḻvarai eḻuntaruḷuvittār ciṟutavūr nālāṅkuṇākarauṭaiyār.

(1. 2) svasti-śrī patineṇ-vishayattukkum akkasālaikaḷ nāyakar.

It is known from the first line that the image was for a festival procession of the Akkasālai temple belonging to Rājēndrachōḻa-perumpaḷḷi. This Rājēndrachōḷa perumpaḷḷi is certainly the Buddhist temple in Nagapattinam which is referred to in the Smaller Leiden plates in relation to the request by the Kaḍāram king for confirming the previous grant. From the second line we know that the image called Akkasālai-nāyakar (Buddha) was to be worshipped by all the *padinen-vishayam*. Akkasalai means "mint" or "workshop of goldsmiths" and the expression *padineṇ-vishayam* (same as *padineṇ-bhūmi*) indicate the merchant guild ainnurruvar. We can say, therefore, that the Akkasalai temple was constructed by the goldsmiths and the Buddha image was meant for all the members of *ainnūṟṟuvar* including goldsmiths. The fact that a Buddhist temple was established by the goldsmiths and the Buddha image was workshipped by all the members of *ainnūṟṟuvar*, most of whom must have been Hindus, shows the

international and amicable character of the guild members of the day and also connects the *ainnūṟṟuvar* with Nagapattinam as well as Kaḍāram.[34]

Now we are all set to discuss the kaḍāram / Srivijaya / San-fo-ch'i problem, namely the location of kaḍāram and its relation with Srivijaya and San-fo-ch'i. [35] Kaḍāram is usually taken by most scholars to have been in the Malay peninsula. This identification should be accepted, as the name seems to have been familiar to Tamil people through their frequent contacts. The middle part of the Malay peninsula, from Victoria point to Penang Island, is just opposite to the Chola country across the Bengal Bay. If we recall the remaining Tamil inscriptions in Krabi and Takua Pa, Kaḍāram would have been that part of the peninsula. However, its identification with Kedah is also possible, as Indian objects were discovered in Bujang valley, [36] and there is the sound correspondence of the two names (Kaḍāram and Kedāh). However, Kaḍāram kings were also known as Srivijaya kings to Tamil people, and that constitutes a problem.

The problem comes from our understanding that Srivijaya was in the Palembang and Jambi regions of southern Sumatra. First, the identification of Shih-li-fo-shih in the T'ang period Chinese sources with Srivijaya suggested by G. Goedes in 1918 has long been accepted by most scholars. Second, we have several seventh-century old Malay inscriptions in the Palembang region recording the activities of Srivijaya kings. These two things lead us to the conculsion that Srivijaya was in southern Sumatra.

This dual representation of Srivijaya in the Malay peninsula and southern Sumatra seems to have existed from rather early times, at least from the eighth century, since we have the famous Ligor Sanskrit inscription dated 775 AD in Nakhon-Si-Thammarat recording the construction of Buddhist temples by a Srivijaya king in the Chaiya area of the Malay peninsula. [37] Though we are not sure whether the kings in southern Sumatra called themselves Srivijaya kings in the begining of the eleventh century when Kaḍāram kings were recorded as Srivijaya kings in Chola inscriptions, the Chinese usage of San-fo-ch'i in the sources of the Sung period seems to have included the countries of both regions, namely the Malay peninsula and Sumatra. Does this dual

representation come from the state structure of Srivijaya or from the recording of foreign countires in some convenient groups by Chinese sources?

Before proceeding to the problem of San-fo-ch'i, we shall examine here the Chola missions sent to China in the eleventh century. The mission sent by Rajaraja I reached the Chinese court in 1015, and that sent by Rajendra I arrived in 1033. However, in between these two, another mission reached a port (Kuang-chou) on the southern coast in 1020, but the envoy died before reaching the Chinese capital. *Sung-shih*, the official annals of the Sung dynasty, records another Chola mission sent to the Chinese court by the king named Ti-hua-chia-lo arriving in 1077. This king's name has long been taken as "dēvakulō" representing a part of Rajendradeva Kulottunga I whose reign covers the date of this mission. Names of three out of the twenty-seven envoys are also given.[38] However, this king's name is rather strange for kulōttuṅga, and moreover in the same year (1077) the arrival of the king of San-fo-ch'i, whose name is exactly the same as that of this Chola king, is recorded in *Sung-shih*. [39] Nevertheless scholars have long been taking him to be Kulōttuṅga I, because in *Sung-shih* one of the two missions is clearly stated as that of the Chola country, while the other belongs to San-fo-ch'i.

However, the discovery of the text of a Chinese inscripition in Kuang-chou (Canton) in 1960s made it necessary for us to change the interpretation on this Chola misssion. [40] The inscription records the repair of a Taoist temple in Kuang-chou by the king of San-fo-ch'i in the later half of the eleventh century. His officers made three return trips to Kuang-chou in that relation during the period from 1065 and 1079. Significantly the names of the king and his two officers are exactly the same as those mentioned in *Sung-shih* as the Chola king and his envoys who reached the Chinese court in 1077 and the king's name also the same as that of the San-fo-ch'i king who is stated to have arrived in 1077. Now, it is clear from this Kuang-chou inscription that Ti-hua-chia-lo was the king of San-fo-ch'i and not Kulōttuṅga I of the Cholas. Then, what caused this confusion in *Sung-shih?* why were the San-fo-ch'i envoys recorded as those of the Cholas also? Though we do not have any decisive clue on this problem, the most probable answer would be the close relationship between the

Cholas and kaḍāram. If Ti-hua-chia-lo was the Kaḍāram king who was saved from danger and reinstated by the Chola king (Virarajendra I) around 1068, the confusion seems to be more natural, though the Kuang-chou inscription is silent about it.

Interpreation of the San-fo-ch'i is another big problem. The name San-fo-ch'i appears almost only from the Sung period.[41] Some scholars take it as deriving from Serboza or Sarboza, the Arabicized form of Srivijaya, some others as from Zābaj or Zābag mentioned in Arab records as the country of the maharajas ruling the Malacca Strait area, and yet some others as representing the three (*san*) states (*vishayas*) consisting of Palembang, Jambi and Malayu in Sumatra.[42] However, reserving the examination of the origin of the term San-fo-ch'i for some other occasion, I should like to point out here the mention in the Chinese sources of the arrival of the envoys of San-fo-ch'i = Chan-pei in 1079 and 1082. Chan-pei represents Jambi and the emergence of its name in the Chinese reocrds, even though as a suffix, certainly indicates the growing strength of Jambi and the decline of Palembang in southern Sumatra during this period. Though it is not in *Sung-shih* as was the case of Jambi, we also come across in some other Chinese sources the expression San-fo-ch'i = Chu-nien (chola).[43] This combination of San-fo-ch'i and Chola in one name cannot represent any other country than Kaḍāram which had such a close relationship with the Cholas.

Thus, we have two almost independent kingdoms called San-fo-ch'i in Chiness sources, one in the Malay peninsula and the other in southern Sumatra in the eleventh century, as in the early period. No matter what the origin of the term San-fo-ch'i was, it included the vast area covering both sides of the Malacca straits. *Ling-wai-tai-ta*, a Chinese work on southern ocean countries written in 1178 enumerates seven countries including San-fo-ch'i as the countries of the southern ocean. The six other countries are Campa, Khmer, Pagan, Java, Quilon and Chola. From the distribution of these countries, we may presume that San-fo-ch'i occupied both the Malay penisula and Sumatra. *Chu-fan-chih*, another Chinese work in 1225 mentions fifteen countries as being under the suzerainty of San-fo-ch'i. They are mostly identified with the port polities in the Malay peninsula and Sumatra.[44] Palembang and Tan-ma-ling (Tambraliṅga in the

Nakhon-Si-Tammarat area of the Malay peninsula) are also included in them, which shows the ascendancy of Jambi in both areas. However, *Ta-te-nan-hai-chi*, a Chinese work around 1300,[45] describes the twelve countries in the Malay peninsula as the countries under the suzerainty of Tan-ma-ling. San-fo-ch'i is independently described as having seventeen countries under it, but most of them are found in Sumatra. It is clear, therefore, that Tan-ma-ling increased its strength greatly during the twelfth century in the middle part of the Malay peninsula, though we do not know the relationship of Tan-ma-ling with Kaḍāram. In the thirteenth century a Chandrabhanu appeared in an inscription in Chaiya as the king of Tambralinga. He seems to have been the same as the Chandrabhānu who invaded Sri Lanka in the thirteenth century and who, according to the *Mahavamsa*, was the king of Javaka. [46]

Though we need further studies on Tambraliṅga and Jāvaka, it has been clarified from the above that in southern Sumatra there had been some powerful kingdoms say from the seventh century till at least the begining of the fourteenth century. The kings named themselves as those of Srivijaya at least in the early stages. At the same time, in the middle part of the Malay peninsula, another powerful kingdom existed. In the eighth and eleventh centuries the kings of that region used the name of Srivijaya as their title, but otherwise their kingdom was known as Kaḍāram to the Tamil people. However, they seem to have been taken over by Tan-ma-ling in Chinese sources in the twelfth century, if the two were not the same. In the late eleventh century, southern Sumatra was dominated by Jambi. *Sung-shih*, the Chinese dynastic annals of the Sung period, however, continued to employ the term San-fo-ch'i to indicate the countires of both the Malay peninsula and Sumatra till the end of the Sung dynasty in 1279.[47]

If we check the frequency of arrivals of the missions from San-fo-ch'i in the Chinese sources, we may notice an interesting tendency. Their recorded arrivals are seen in two clusters, one consisting of some sixteen or so arrivals concentrating in the period from 960 to 1028, and the other, of seven or so arrivals in the period from 1077 to 1094, though we have four more stray arrivals in 1128, 1146, 1156 and 1178. [48] This distribution

pattern of their arrivals creates two problems which are somewhat related to each other. One; how can we distinguish between the two different regions from which the San-fo-ch'i missions came? The other; why were these arrivals so concentrated, particularly in the beginning of the Sung dynasty and towards the end of the eleventh century?

The first problem is not eary to solve. Ssu-li-chou-lo-wu-ni-fo-ma-t'iao-hua and Ssu-li-ma-lo-p'i who sent the missions of 1003 and 1008 have already been identified with Chūḷāmaṇivarman and Māṟa- Vijayōttuṅgavarman of the Larger Leiden plates, and were certainly the kings of Kaḍāram. Ti-hua-chia-lo who was recorded as the Chola king in the Chinese sources also must have been a Kaḍāram king. On the other hand, the missions of 1079 and 1082, which are recorded as San-fo-ch'i = Chan-pei, were certainly those coming from southern Sumatra. Then, what about the remaining missions? How can we differentiate among them? The *sa-tien* custom respectfully performed at the Chinese court by the envoys of Chu-nien (chola) and San-fo-ch'i may serve as a clue to it, even though partially.[49] However, further studies are required on this point.

The second problem is also not so eary to solve, but the concentration of the arrivals of the mission must have reflected some political situation in San-fo-ch'i, the sender country, and also the change of economic conditions and trade policies in China, the receiver country. The frist cluster can be chiefly explained by the change of dynasty in China in 960. The newly established Sung dynasty must have welcomed and encouraged the coming of foreign missions. San-fo-ch'i also must have been flourishing during this period, as it sent so many missions to China. The Cholas were in their heyday in the beginning of the eleventh century under the rule of Rajaraja I and his son Rajendra I, who sent their missions to China. Then, the competition would have been the cause of the Chola invasion of Kaḍāram. The aspiration of Jambi to ascend to the overlordship of the Malacca straits when the Cholas suffered defeat in Sri Lanka in the 1070s must have enabled it to send missions to China in its own name.[50] This can explain to a certain extent the emergence of the second cluster.

Conclusion

Returning to the problem of merchent activities, we should pay more attention to the period in which missions were sent to China neither by San-fo-ch'i nor by Chu-nien. The Ming dynasty in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries banned all private trade with foreign countries, allowing only official ships into their ports from countries which accepted the Min's suzerainty. However, the Sung and Yuan dynasties allowed or encouraged private trade with foreign merchants, though they controlled the trade through the officers stationed in the ports. Therefore, the absence of the arrival of state missions did not mean the absence of activities by the merchants.

Though the envoys of the state missions also would have included many leading merchants of the country, the period of absence of the state missions must have been the period in which the merchants organised as guilds took leadership in foreign trade. The *ainnūṟṟuvar* inscriptions suggest their noncommital policy toward local politics. They had, by nature of commerce, an international character and crossed the ocean for their trade just as members of the merchant guilds.

In Ch'uan-chou (Zayton), a famous port in southern China, there remains a Tamil inscription dated 1281 recording the establishment of a Siva temple for the health of the Yuan king.[51] This inscription, combined with other Tamil inscriptions in Southeast Asia and also with the Nagapattinam bronze Buddha inscription, testifies to the vigorous activities and amicable character of those Tamil merchants who crossed the ocean to Southeast Asia and beyond during the ancient and medieval periods.

There is a Chinese proverb saying that by studying the past, we can know the future. Though we should not confuse the research in history with the arbitrary interpretation of the past, the activities the Tamil merchants under took in Southeast Asia during the ancient and medieval periods will certainly show us the way we should proceed in the coming century towards the creation of a true world culture.

Notes

1. For this project I received grants from the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, Government of Japan.

2. Indian scholars are : Dr. K. V. Ramesh, Ex-Joint Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, Dr. K. V. Raman, Professor of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Madras, Dr. Y. Subbarayalu, Professor of Archaeology, Tamil University, and Dr. P. Shanmugam, Reader, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Madras. Japanese scholars are : Dr. Yoshiaki Ishizawa, Professor of Southeast Asian Art History, Sophia University, Dr. Yumio Sakurai, Professor of Southeast Asian History, University of Tokyo, and Mr. Yasushi Ogura, Associate Professor of Indian Studies, Tokai University.

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4. Ian C. Glover, "Recent Archaeological Evidence for Early Maritime Contacts between India and Southeast Asia", Paper for Seminar on the "Techno-archaeological Perspectives of Seafaring in the Indian Ocean", NISTADS, New Delhi, February/March 1994.

5. For the period from the fifth to the eighth centuries we have many Sanskrit inscriptions, and some of them are written in Kadamba script, the best example of which may be the Kutei inscriptions of Mūlavarman, and some others in Pallava Grantha script, and example of which is the Ligor inscription of Nakhon Si Thammarat.

6. Tharapong Srisuchat, "Thailand and the Maritime Silk Route : The Role of the Ancient Ports and Harbour Cities in Thailand" and Amara Srisuchat, "Significant Archaeological

objects in Tailand Associated with Maritime Trade", both in *The Silpakorn Journal*, 33-6, 1990.

7. K. A Nilakanta Sastri, "The Takua-pa (Siam) Tamil Inscription", *Journal of Oriental Research*, VI, 1942.

8. Meera Abraham, *Two Medieval Merchant Guilds of South India, Manohar*, New Delhi, 1988.

9. H.B. Sarkar, *Corpus of the Inscriptions of Java*, 2 vols, Mukhopadhay, Calcutta, 1971/72. Vol.I, p.53 and Vol.II, p.276.

10. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, "A Tamil Merchant-guild in Sumatra", *BKI*, LXXII, 1932.

11. Abraham, *Two Medieval Merchant Guilds.*

12. We are grateful to Dr. Suwati Kartiwa, Director, National Museum in Jakarta, for the permission.

13. This expression "step on the spread cloth" seems to mean that one can get into the town, or that one can start business.

14. Tamil vēlā/vēḷa seems to derive from Sanskrit vela which means "seashore".

15. *Nagara sēnāpati*, the designation of the first individual, seems to mean "leader of the town" and māvettugaḷ may mean elephant trainers.

16. In the late fifteenth century there was the famous Kuññali- maraikkār who was the navy captain of the Zamorin in Calicut.

17. *Kaḍigai* means "fortification" and *tāvaḷam* means "fair". *Kaḍigai tāvaḷam*, therefore, seems to mean "fortified market".

18. Koyilpatti inscription (*AR* 1964/65-286).

19. Pilanmalai inscription (*SII*, viii, 442).

20. A. Veluppillai, *Ceylon Tamil Inscriptions*, 2 parts, Peradeniya, 1971/72.

21. The registration number of this stone is D-181. In the registration book the letters "ov/Grucq 276" are also seen regarding this stone, though their meaning is unclear.

22. For reading the old Javanese we were helped by Dr.M.M. Sukarto K. Atmodjo, the retired Epigraphist, Archaeology Department, Government of Indonesia.

23. E. Hultzsch, "A Vaishnava Inscription at Pagan", *Epigraphia Indica,* VII, 1903.

24. For transliterating Chinese letters into the Roman alphabet, I have employed in this article the Wade-Giles system in order to give conformity with the previous studies.

25. K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyer, "The Larger Leiden Plates (of Rājarāja I)", *Epigraphia Indica,* XXII, 1934.

26. K. G. Krishnan discusses the practice of adding the Sanskrit plates later to the Tamil plates issued earlier. K. G. Krishnan, *Studies in South Indian History and Epigraphy,* New Era Publications, Madras 1981, p. 160.

27. We are grateful to Dr. K. V. Ramesh, Ex-Joint Director General and Dr. M. N. Katti, Chief Epigraphist, both Archaeological Survey of India, for the permission.

28. Nilakanta Sastri once admitted that the first reference to the Kadaram expedition was found in a thirteenth-year (AD 1025) inscription, but he later corrected it to be found in fourteenth-year (1026) inscriptions. See K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas,* 2nd ed., University of Madras, 1955, pp. 211 ff.

29. *SII,* II, 20.

30. See Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas,* pp.211 ff. and G. Coedes, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia,* East-West Centre Press, Honolulu, 1968, pp. 142 and 143.

31. *SII,* III, 84 and others.

32. K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyer, "The Smaller Leiden Plates of Kulottunga I", *Epigraphia Indica,* XXII, 1934.

33. Noboru Karashima and Y. Subbarayalu, "An inscription on the pedestal of the bronze Buddha image of the Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller 3rd collection : International character of Nagapattinam merchants during the Chola period", *Journal of East-West Maritime Relations,* Vol.3, 1994.

34. In Nagapattinam a brick tower locally called the China-pagoda had existed till 1853. As the T'u-t'a (earthern tower) section of *Tao-i-chih-lueh* mentions the tower as having a Chinese inscription dated AD 1267 in that place, most scholars identify it with Nagapattinam. In the vicinity of the tower many pieces of bronze Buddha images were discovered.

35. In the following study of the Kadaram/Srivijaya/San-fo-ch'i problem, I was benefited greatly by the studies made by Professor Rokuro Kuwata and Professor Sumio Fukami. Prof. Kuwata's monumental work on San-fo-ch'i, "A Study of Srivijaya" (in Japanese), was recently reprinted in *Nankai - Tozaikoutsushi - Ronkou,* Kyuko-shoin, Tokyo, 1993. Prof. Fukami's discussion is found in his article "Reexamination of San-fo-ch'i" (in Japanese), *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* Tokyo, 25-2 (1987). I regret that the Prof. Kuwata's work originally published in a Japanese academic journal in 1936 has never been referred to by Western scholars since it was written in Japanese, but the gist of it was published afterwards in English in the *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko,* No. 30, Tokyo, 1972.

36. Nik Hassan Shuhaimi Nik Abd. Rahman and Othman Mohd. Yatim, *Antiquities of Bujang Valley,* Museum Association of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, 1990.

37. Coedes, *The Indianized States,* pp. 84 and 91.

38. The three envoys are : Commissioner Ch'i-lo-lo, Vice-Commissioner Nan-pei-p'a-t'o and Assistant Ma-t'u-hua-lo.

39. Apart from *Sung-shih,* only *Wen-hsian-t' ung-k'ao* records this year's mission of San-fo-ch'i. The Chola mission is recorded in *Hsu-tzu-chih- t'ung-chien-ch'ang pien* and *Ling-wai-tai-ta,* though the king's name was omitted in them.

40. Tan Yeok Seong, "The Sri Vijayan Inscription of Canton (A.D. 1079)", *Journal of Southeast Asian History,* 5-2, 1964.

41. *Ts'e-fu-yuan-kuei* and *T'ang-hui-yao* record the arrival of the mission of Fo-ch'i (not San-fo-ch'i) in 904. *Sung-shih* also refers to the arrival of a mission in 904 at the beginning of San-fo-ch'i section.

42. O.W. Wolters, "Studying Srivijaya", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* LII-2, 1979, p.23.

43. P'ang-yuan-ying, *Wen-ch'ang-tsa-lu,* vol.21 (Yuan-fêng-jen-hsu, eighth month) and Yeh-meng-te, *Shih-lin-yen-yu,* vol.2 (Yuan-feng period)

44. They correspond in general to the places mentioned in the Chola inscriptions to have been conquered by the navy of Rajendra I on his expedition.

45. Ch'en-lien-ch'ing, "Studies on the countries of southern sea and beyond described in *Ta-te-nan-hai-chih" Wen Shi,* Vol. 27, Beijin, 1986.

46. Coedes, *The Indianized States,* pp.184 and 185. Besides the inscriptions of Vīra Pāṇḍya who was involved in the war between Jāvaka and Sri Lanka, *Maṇimēkalai,* a Buddhist epic in Tamil in the fifth century (Canto 14 and 15) refers to Jāvaka. P. Pandyan, *Maṇimēkalai,* South Indian Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Madras, 1989, pp.124 and 128.

47. The foreign country section of *Yuan-shih* (Annals of the Yuan dynasty) does not describe San-fo-ch'i independently, though it refers to it casually. *Min-shih* (Annals of the Ming dynasty) describes it independently in the section on foreign countries and states that Kan-t'o-li was its old name. Kan-t'o-li may have been Kadaram.

48. The first cluster is : 960, 961, 962, 971, 972, 974, 975, 980, 983, 985, 988, 992, 1003, 1008, 1017 and 1028. The second cluster is : 1077, 1079, 1082, 1084, 1088, 1090 and 1094. However, there may have been another mission in 1082 and 1088, and also a mission in 1095, if we depend on some sources other than *Sung-shih,* which makes the total of the second cluster ten.

49. It is stated in *Sung-shih* and other sources that the Chola envoys ascended the platform of the audience hall in the Chinese Court holding up a golden bowl in which pearls, camphor and precious stones were contained. They then crouched on the platform and, ladeling the contents from the bowl, scattered them in front of the Chinese emperor seated on his throne. Envoys explained that this was the highest way of expressing their respect. Chinese texts named this practice the *sa-tien.* One of the *San-fo-ch'i* missions also practiced this in 1088 and the ritual section of *Sung-shih* states that *sa-tien* is the practice of

Chu-nien and San-fo-ch'i. The San-fo-ch'i mission which practiced it must have been the mission from Kadaram.

50. For the vicissitudes of the war in Sri Lanka and the retreat of the Chola army from there in the 1070s, see Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas,* pp.311 ff.

51. Noboru Karashima, "Trade Relations Between South India and China During the 13th and 14th Centuries", *Journal of East-West Maritime Relations,* Vol. 1. Tokyo, 1989.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE SOURCES OF IMMORTALITY OF TIRUKKURAL

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1. Introduction

A brief introduction to Tirukkural[1] will be in order to start with. It is not a scripture like the Bible or the Koran; not even a sacred book like the Bhagavat Gita. It is not an epic or a piece of literary work like the Ramayana or the Mahabharatha. It is a book of 1330 couplets dealing with the `Art of Life', laying down guidelines for what may be called, `right living' or living the `right way' in this world. As regard its merit, one may quote the assessment by two great men, i.e., Albert Schweitzer and M. Ariel.

There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which one finds so much lofty wisdom.

- Albert Schweitzer

. . . that which above all is wonderful in the Kural is the fact that its author addressess himself without regard to castes, peoples or beliefs, to the whole community of mankind; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason: that he proclaims in their very essence in their eternal abstractedness, virtue and truth; that it presents, as it were, in one group, the highest laws of domestic and social life; that he is equally perfect in thought, in language, and in poetry; in the austere metaphysical contemplation of the great mysteries of the Divine nature as in the easy and graceful analysis of the tenderest emotions of the heart.

- M. Ariel

These are representative of the kind of assessment the book has received from many scholars during this century and the last: i.e., over some 1600 years or more after the book was written.

The very first observation is the fact that it is a secular book. During the days of Valluvar many religions existed in India. There were Buddhists, Jains, Hindus, as well as agnostics and atheists. But Secularism as a concept was unknown. Valluvar himself was a believer. He himself must have observed a particular religion.

But in his book he advocates no religion; he does not even refer to any religion. What is more, there is no indication by which one can identify the religion to which he belonged - notwithstanding the fact that there is a full chapter[2] in `Praise of God'. One could hardly imagine that a book written two millennia ago, dealing with three aspects of Life i.e. Righteousness, Wealth and Pleasure[3] will so completely steer clear of any advocacy of, or even reference to, any religion. It is therefore a work whose appeal is for followers of all religions - a truly secular book.

2. Relevance to contemporary world

Secondly we come to the relevence of the book in terms of time and space. It was said earlier that it is not a scripture. The Bible will live as long as christianity is practised and the Koran as long as Islam lives. So is the case of any other scripture. The Kural, being a secular work, has no followers as such based on faith. The great epics of the world last because of the beauty of poetry and the grandeur of the characters. The Kural has no such advantage. It deals with such a mundane topic as the Art of Living and concerns day to day living.

The society as it existed, when the Kural was written, was different beyond any comparison with the one we have. Most of the modern concepts and practices, considered simple and self evident today, did not exist at that time. Democracy, socialism, welfare state, social justice, equality, dignity of the human individual and many other concepts were unknown. Valluvar lived and wrote in an age whose problems, challenges, ambitions, aspirations and even values were very different: vastly different from those of the present. How can a book written so long ago, in so different an environment, dealing with so earthly a subject as the Art of Living, be relevant to the modern society that has seen so many changes, so many revolutions?

Valluvar lived at a time when mobility was so poor; one's knowledge of other societies and the wide world was so meagre; one's contact with people of different climes and cultures was so limited that one could have observed life and understood it only from the narrow world of one's own ancestors and contemporaries. How can a work circumscribed by all these limitations have a

universal appeal? The aim here is to try to find answers to these questions.

Bharathidasan says that'a book is good for the age it was written in'. Bharathi declares :

To suit all the needs of time,

To meet the changing concepts of every age,

Acceptable to the wide world

and enduring for ever -

Such a book does not exist.

To what extent can the Kural defy these categorical statements? If it is universal and immortal, what are the characteristics that lend immortality? One may identify five aspects of the Kural that seem to contribute to this:

i. Universality and

ii. Immortality

They are :

i. Emphasis on wisdom rather than knowledge

ii. generalisation

iii. scientific outlook

iv. extolling human effort

v. presenting a possible ideal world

3. Words of Wisdom

If we look at our day to day life we come across things that we refer to as information, knowledge and wisdom. Information is rather of transient importance ; sometimes even trivial. Knowledge and wisdom are those that matter for our discussion.

When we talk of research and development and the phenomenal progress, we talk of the invention of new knowledge: the rapid growth of knowledge in every field. We are not talking about wisdom. We are talking about becoming more knowledgeable; not necessarily more wise.

If we take Valluvar, he would not have been as knowledgeable as a high school student today, in either mathematics or other sciences or even social sciences. The modern socieity is 2000 years ahead of Valluvar. It is more knowledgeable than Valluvar; but not necessarily wiser than Valluvar. A school boy may be more informed than his father; but not necessarily wiser than his father.

We can consider our knowledge of the world under four broad systems;

i. physical systems

ii. biological systems

iii. social systems

iv. metaphysical systems

Valluvar stays away from Physical systems and Biological systems. These are systems where knowledge grows rapidly: obsolescence sets in very soon. If we take social systems we know less about the psychology of a society than about the psychology of man. If you are specialised in the psychology of individuals you may become a professor of psychology; but if you become an expert in the psychology of a crowd, you may become the Prime Minister of the country.

Valluvar deals with the individual; as a citizen, as a husband, as a wife, as a son or daughter, as a family man, as a friend, as a lover, as an ascetic, as a minister, as a king or one in any position of power and authority, and so on. In all these he will only touch upon things that have universal appeal. He goes down to the unshifting foundations of human existence and living, and from there lays down maxims. We may see a few examples.

In a society, we help people; we receive help from people. How do you measure the magnitude of the help? or the valuve of the help? Valluvar says that

The value of an act of help is not
in the help itself
It is in the greatness and worth
of the person who receives it[105]

Some will value highly, even a modest help; some others will ignore even if you sacrifice your life for them. The value is not in the help itself; it is in the worth of the individual to whom the help has been given.

Similarly he raises another question. How do you determine the greatness of an individual? His answer is:

> Whether a person is great or small
> will be decided by what he leaves behind him.

What one leaves behind may refer to what one bequeaths at the end of one's term in an office or at the end of one's career. You may judge a person by what tradition he establishes or what successors he prepares. That one's greatness must be judged not by what one is, but by what one leaves behind is an extraordinary touchstone and will remain valid for ever.

Talking about friendship Valluvar would say that a friend is not just for fun and laughter, but for administering a rebuke when one tends to become guilty of excesses.

> Friendship is not for fun and laughter;
> it is for administering a rebuke beforehand
> when one tends to become guilty of excesses (784)

While dealing with kings he lists out certain qualities. Among them, he makes a particular reference to the capacity on the part of the king to listen to unfavourable criticism. Valluvar says:

> The whole world will come under the umbrella
> of the king who is capable of listening
> with tolerance towords that are
> critical of him and there forebitter (389)

While this is meant for kings, one can substitute in place of the king either a Minister, Chairman, Manager, Director or any one in comparable position of power and authority. One could quote a number of instances for words of wisdom. Perhaps we may refer to one more in the field of Management. Valluvar is not a person interested in theorising. He is one who would always advocate action and would declare that one be judged as small or great only on the basis of one's deeds.

He devotes one full chapter for selection and employment of persons. He provides the following guidelines:

> After having considered that this man can
> accomplish this (task) by (employing) this means,
> choose that man and leave that (task) to him (517)

He would advocate that the choice of person must be based on an assessment of the capacity of the individual, taking into account the means he may be capable of employing or the tools that he can use. One should also take into account the nature of the task. **Such observations as those quoted in the foregoing will remain valid transcending time and space.**

4. Generalisation

Another important aspect of Valluvar's words is his capacity for abstraction and generalisation. Generalisation, by and large, indicates an advanced stage of knowledge in any field. For instance men identified individual objects first. Then only they classified them under common families. If we take the case of trees, initially it was a palm, a plantain or a pine. Only later came the family called `trees'. Similarly men identified the tiger, the lion, the elephant and later they found they come under the class of `animals'.

Whatever subject Valluvar touches he generalises and makes it applicable to the human society almost irrespective of the place, time, the nature of government and the type of economic structure. We may possibly cite an example of another author who explicitly states having adopted this kind of an approach in order to make his writing applicable to a wider population. Francis Bacon who lived 1500 years after Valluvar says that when he translated his book `Advancement of Learning' from English to Latin, he made specific efforts to ensure that when he tried to free his writing from the limitations of English by translating it into Latin, he did not like to perpetuate the limitation by keeping the matter particularly applicable to the people of one language.

Valluvar would often speak of scholarly books and advise his readers to "do as stated in authoritative treatises or as suggested by acknowledged authors". He would leave it as a general statement and would not mention either the name of a book or that of an author so that one may substitute any author, any book

depending on the circumstances. It is with a design and determination that he avoids particularization and makes it possible for us to substitue that book or that author relevant to that subject at that point of time. This is the approach that Valluvar employs to make his observations enjoy continued relevance and one sees that this design pervades every chapter. In the Section on Wealth, Valluvar deals with the choice of time and tool for doing a job thus:

> Is there an impossible task
>
> for the one who chooses
>
> the right moment and the (right) tool? (483)

The tool for a job will change with time, with place. One must do today's job with today's tool. If you do today's job with yesterday's tool, it is said that tomorrow you would be out of business. Obviously, we cannot do today's jobs with the tool of Valluvar's time. Consequently Valluvar would stress on more than one occasion the need to use the right tool, but would never mention or give a list of tools. Consequently we may use in the place of tool either the 8000 year old plough or the most modern tool, the personal computer. He makes room for both.

There is perhaps no book dealing with human virtues that does not stress the need for good conduct or the importance of good conduct. Valluvar devotes two chapters, one on propriety of good conduct and the other on `Inconsistent Conduct' and the consequences accompanying them. But he does not state what constitues good conduct or what would be termed the opposite of it. One may wonder : `of what use is it, if one does not specify what is good and what is bad but makes a general statement in favour of good conduct which perhaps everyone could say?'. He realises the difficulty in identifying good conduct which by virtue of its very nature tends to change from place to place and from time to time. While all would accept that good conduct is desirable, formidable difficulty arises in defining good conduct. Take for instance, such a commonly stressed virtue as chastity. It has been exhalted as a great virtue over the ages and in modern times too. But at no time was there a universally accepted interpretation of chastity. Among the ancient Tamils, the poets declared that a truly chaste woman would not be coveted by another man; it is not enough for them if she does not allow any weak thought about a

man other than her husband to enter her mind. It is no doubt a tall order, unpractical; but that was the limit to which the definition of this particular virtue has been carried. We have at the other end, societies that permit a woman to marry more than once and consider her chaste as long as she is faithful to the man she is married to, at a given time. Polyandry is still not a matter of the past. Valluvar was able to consider the local and ephemeral nature of the accepted norms of behaviour in a given society and avoided categorising good conduct in detail; but not to define good conduct could also mean that the book is of no help. Consequently, after emphasizing and reiterating the importance of good decorum he says,

> Those who know not
> how to act agreeably to the world
> though they have learnt many things are still ignorant (140)

In Tamil tradition, the term ` world' means a body of great men. **Therefore according to Valluvar, good conduct is what the great men of the society lay down from time to time. Thus, by a simple definition, Valluvar takes care of, and accounts for, all possible incarcations that the concept of ` good decorum' may take in every part of the world and in every age or period of time.**

Valluvar emphasises education and has three chapters under headings pertaining to education. In all the 30 couplets he extols the virtues of education, the power of knowledge and baseness of illiteracy. But in all the 30 couplets he does not make any mention of the subject to be learnt or the book to be studied, though he mentions more than once the need to study scholarly books. If the chapter was meant for monarchs, he could have referred to the 64 arts that were recommended in those days for kings to attain proficiency in. If meant for others, he could have referred to grammar, language, literature, medicine, logic and many other subjects that were then normally learnt. But he does not mention them. He says quite precisely ` **learn what is to be learnt.'**

What is to be learnt varies from time to time, profession to profession. If the list of what is to be learnt was prepared in detail in the period of Valluvar, it may have very little significance today. By laying down the criterion, ` **learn what is to be learnt'**, Valluvar transcends individual professions and specific periods. While he

chooses to stress with all the force at his command the need to learn, he would not specify what is to be learnt. It is a matter of unending wonder that in the three full chapters relevant to learning, he would not refer to any subject, any book, any author.

We may take up another example; the chapter on the `Glory of Defence'. The defence forces and protective devices were given the topmost place in the scheme of things in his time. In those days four components of the defence forces were well recognized; the soldiers on foot; those on chariots; the fighters on horses; and those on elephants. Valluvar, while describing the defence forces says that

The defence force which is
complete in its components and conquers
without fear of being hurt is
foremost among the possessions of a ruler (761)

He would say that the forces should have all the components; must not be afraid of the sufferings of war; and must have the ability to win. He would only say that the forces should have all the components of defence, but would not specify one or more of the well recognized components that were in use at that time. Today we may introduce under defence components the army, the navy and the airforce. While Valluvar knew that the defence forces would always have components, he must have realised that the details of the components might vary from country to country and even in the same country from time to time. By restricting his statement to relevant components, he has rendered his observations universal in time and space.

We may take another example from medicine in order to appreciate the degree of abstraction and generalisation.

The man who *learnt* medicine must
assess the condition of the sick person,
the nature of the disease and the season and then
decide on treatment (949)

He would only say a person who has learnt medicine but would neither refer to the system of medicine nor to any acknowledged treatises on medicine; nor even to the names of

the authors of such books, even though at least two systems namely Siddha and Ayurveda existed at that time and books had been written and followed during his days. In all the ten couplets, he does not refer to any system, any book, any author.

He has a full chapter on the importance of power of speech. But would not mention the name of any language including his own mother tounge, Tamil. He has a chapter on state and the characteristics of a prosperous country but does not mention the name of any country or place or city or the kingdoms that existed then in the Tamil land or elsewhere on the sub continent. He talks about the need for having perennial rivers but does not refer to any river, the Ganges or the Cauvery or the Vaigai. He talks about rulers and governance of a country. He does not refer to any dynasty, any king; the great Tamil royal dynasties of the Cholas, the Pandavas and the Cheras do not find mention anywhere. He has scrupulously avoided any mention or reference that might circumscribe the applicability of his observations to a country, or race.

In any topic that he has dealt with, he has endeavoured to abstract the core of the subject and succeeded in making his observations so general that they lend themselves to interpretation in terms of contemporary developments, thus accounting for all the changes that may take place in human progress. It is this approach, this refined strategy, that has substantially contributed to the Kural in transcending the limitations of space and time and enabled it to be relevant, centuries after it was written.

5. Scientific Outlook

A reference has been made earlier to scientific outlook in Valluvar's work. The ultimate objective of human endeavour is finding the truth. It is in this pursuit that humanity has involved itself for generations from ancient times. The procedure we use in the modern world in the pursuit of truth has often been based on methods of science. This helps us develop an approach that promotes objectivity and freedom from possible bias and prejudices.

The `scientific method' as we know of it today, took shape mainly in the 17th century. Among the ancient thinkers there were many who were endowed with a scientific outlook and used almost

unconsciously a scientific approach in their pursuit of knowledge. They were capable of rising above the limitations of their age; they could cast aside the prevailing traditions, wherever necessary; penetrate into the possible developments of the future and analyse the problems on hand against this background. They exhibited an extraordinary perception and a combination of reasoning and intuition for understanding reality. One finds these characteristics in *Valluvar*.

We normally belive that Dharma triumphs in the world. If so, the righteous ones must be reversed in the case of the unjust. But we do see from the down of civilization, cases where the just ones suffer and the unjust live in plenty and prosperity. Valluvar sees this contradiction. He says:

> The prosperity of individuals
> who are envious and jealous and
> the poverty of the righteous
> need to be pondered over. (169)

Valluvar raises a question : "Why is it that we find that some among the envious and the jealous are very well off and the righteous ones suffer?" He does not give an answer, but concedes that this requires investigation. It could have been easy for Valluvar to find an answer in the frame work of the faiths and beliefs that existed in his days. The believers are never short of answers to such questions. They have a ready answer for every question. In this case they would have said, `it is God's will' ; or `it is fate'.

Valluvar believes in God ; he believes in previous births and rebirth. He believes also that the consequences of one's actions in the previous birth follow in the present and the actions in this birth have their effects in the next. Within this framework, he could easily find an answer and conclude that if a righteous person suffers in this birth it might be because of his evil deeds in the previous birth; if an envious person is prosperous, he is perhaps enjoying the benefits of his good actions in his previous birth.

Valluvar does not resort to finding such a simple answer. He has an open mind, an enquiring mind. He concedes that neither our faith nor our wisdom, nor our knowledge does provide all the answers. There are things that lie beyond all the systems, human

or divine, that we have on hand. This kural demonstrates the resilience and openness of Valluvar's mind and the streak of a scientific approach in his outlook. Surprisingly, not many have highlighted this aspect or taken a close look at this couplet. The following two couplets almost lay down a definition for scientific approach.

True knowledge or wisdom is the
perception of the truth
in everything, whatever be
the nature of the thing (355)

True knowledge or wisdom is the
discerning of the truth
in everything said,
no matter by whomsoever it was said (423)

In the first case, he demands that whatever be the nature of a thing investigated, our aim must be to find the truth and our attachment to it or aversion to it or regard for it should not influence our approach. In the second case, in any statement made, the personality or the relationship or the standing of the person who made the statement should not influence our judgment ; whoever the author of the statement may be, we must look for the truth in it.

The Indian culture reflects efforts along the four basic human pursuits identified as Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha meaning righteous living, wealth, pleasure and salvation respectively. The first three concern this word; the last one concers the world beyond. The first three are open to liberal investigations. But the moment you enter the world beyond, be it Heaven or Hell, religion enters the scene; faith follows and objectivity becomes alien. Valluvar chooses only the first three and does not speeak about salvation explicitly. By this single step, he keeps religion outside his discussion; removes all obstacles to objectivity; removes all factors that may inhibit or exclude the enquiry into the contents; keeps all problems of unquestioning faith outside the purview of the discussion and presents to the world a secular treatise or a secular Veda.

It does not mean that Valluvar has totally ignored salvation or has not thought of the possibility of the concept of heaven or life thereafter. He declares:

He who on the earth lives in the conjugal state
as he should live, will be placed
among the Gods who dwell in Heaven (50)

According to him all that is needed for one is to live in this world in a manner that one should live; such people need not go to heaven. They may become Devas on this earth and should there be a heaven after this life, they will become naturally entitled to it. Valluvar's approach is, "We live in this world; life in this world is what we have in our hands. It is within our power to regulate it and make it meaningful and satisfying. It must be our aim to strive to make what is available, rich and whole." **If we live the life of a family man in a manner that is proper and what is made known as right living that should ensure salvation which must be a consequence of our own living in this world and not a separate objective to be pursued.** This is an extremely revolutionary and radical statement. It was Bharathi who imagined that the Devas from the heavens would descend on the earth and become our friends, companions and relatives. Bharathi says:

Where the Devas of the Heavens
become our friends and drink
nectar in our company.
The Devas acknowledge our success;
they marry our women:
We embrace the sweet
ladies of the Devas and jumb in joy.

About 2000 years earlier Valluvar has made the same declaration in a more general way.

6. Human Effort

The modern world exhibits the power of knowledge. We realise today that knowledge is a resource by itself. We have come to take this almost for granted in the later half of this century. But this was neither the tradition nor the pervasive thinking of the people

in the days of Valluvar. But, Valluvar while speaking of knowledge declares:

Those who possess wisdom/knowledge
possess everything;
those who have not wisdom/knowledge
whatever they may possess, have nothing

What is important here, is the statement that those who have knowledge possess everything. While commenting on this kural Parimelalahar explains as follows:

Since all wealth is created and protected by knowledge, Valluvar says that one who has it, has everything. If one has wealth, one needs knowledge to protect it from loss and destruction, and if due to divine `will' it is lost or destroyed, one who is without knowledge does not have the tool to create it again and, therefore, Valluvar says that those that do not possess knowledge, whatever they may have, have nothing.

The observation that those who have knowledge are capable of creating wealth even if it is not there is astounding. We are aware today of the fact that materials are created by research out of matter. Countries have become rich and prosperous irrespective of their size or natural resources or population on the basis of the level of science and technology that could be made use of in the process. But a statement reflecting the capacity of knowledge made two millennia ago is certainly something remarkable.

Valluvar is not interested in those who preach and philosophies but pursue no action. For him, the great are those that perform deeds that are uncommon and admirable.

One's deeds are the touchstone of
one's greatness or smallness

The high and the low are determined by their performance. He exhorts:

Yield not to the feebleness which says

"this task is too difficult and
far above my competence".
The attempt to do the task itself will give

the greatness (of mind) necessary (611)

The psychologists of the day talk about the subconscious and its powers. Valluvar lifts to great heights the power of human will and he does it in many ways:

> Strength in action is (simply) one's
> strength of mind; all others (abilities)
> are not to be treated as strength (661)

> If those who have contemplated (an undertaking)
> possess the firmness of mind (in executing it)
> they will obtain whatever they have desired
> even as they have desired it (666)

Valluvar enters into an inquiry about the relative strength of fate and human effort. Notwithstanding many of the statements where he emphasises the strength of fate in no uncertain language, he ultimately concludes:

> Those who continue to work hard
> on right lines and without any decline in commitment
> will vanquish even fate. (620)

The statement is categorical and unequivocal. It is remarkable since Valluvar lived in a society which belived that :

Other than in accordance with His will, even an atom will not move.

Valluvar is a bard who sings the glory of action: a poet who makes performance the criterion for greatness; a philosopher who assures a heaven on earth for the endeavouring and persevering. No one of his age that we know of has acclaimed action as unreservedly and in as favourable a light as Valluvar did. His message in brief is : the one who is settled in conjugal life; conducts himself in conformity with the world as conceived by great men; thinks high, is not awed by the difficulties of a task; learns whatever is required to be learnt and leads his life the way it should be led - he does not have to go in search of Heaven: he would enjoy the status of divinity in this earth itself. **The book that contains this message will remain relevant and will inspire generations of humanity as long as humanity has faith and confidence in itself.**

7.A Possible Ideal World

Lastly, we come to Valluvar's concept of the possible ideal world. From the beginning of civilization man has been motivated by an aspiration to strive for and achieve something higher, something beyond the constraints and limitations of this world. The Angels, the Devas and the Heavens are in a way the manifestations of this ambition which is deeply rooted in the human psyche. It reflects a desire for achieving a state higher than the one he is in. There may exist or may not exist Devas: but we should entertain an ambition to become like them.

It is with a view to creating an ideal society that intellectuals develop many models. The Republic of Plato, the Utopia of Thomas More, the New Atlantis of Francis Bacon are examples of these efforts. All our epics depict an ideal country, an ideal hero and an ideal heroine. An example is Kamban's description of the Khosala land.

There was no philanthropy since
no one was poor;
There was no great strength (of Army)
since there was no enemy;
There was no truth, since
falsehood was unknown;
There was no one to be considered as
enlightened, since education flourished among all.

Obviously Kamban is describing an ideal country. We have Kannagi for chastity; Savithri for dedication to her husband; Rama for loyalty to his wife. These characters were our ideals. We do not think of them as those that common person could follow. Valluvar endeavours to visualise a society that is ideal and is also possible from the point of view of implementation.

In Science and Technology we imagine ideal situations in order to find a classical or analytical solution. We idealize, simplify and find a solution under conditons which are not true to nature. Having found a solution on the basic of certain assumptions, we apply corrections to bring a solution closer to the real world. Valluvar follows a similar approach. Valluvar gives predominance to two virtues:

i) Non-killing and

ii) The avoidance of falsehood.

He says:

Not to destroy life is an incomparably
great good:
next to it in goodness
ranks freedom from falsehood (323)

Valluvar has devoted a whole chapter to truth, stressing in many ways the avoidance of falsehood.

If one has the power to abstain from falsehood, yes,
to abstain from falsehood, virtue will be well with him,
even though he practises no other virtue
even though he practises no other virtue (297)

But there are situations which present genuine problems and pose challenges in real life in avoiding falsehood. Imagine that a drunkard in a mood of mad anger is chasing a person to strike and kill him. The victim is on the run to escape from the danger. Assume that you know the place where he has found an asylum. The drunkard comes and asks whether you have seen the person running in this direction and whether you know as to where he is? Your answer is to be `Yes', if you decide not to utter falsehood. If you say `No', obviously it is uttering a falsehood; but you possibly save the life of a person.The question now is, `what should be your approach'? Valluvar defines truth in an extremely revolutionary manner. He says:

Truth is speaking of such words as are
free from the least degree of evil (to others) (291)

In other words, looked at from a larger perspective, truth cannot be evil. In the context of the example we have taken, telling what may be considered the truth will result in the person being hurt by the drunkard. If you say that you have not seen the person, it will obviously be false. Valluvar propounds an extraordinary theory. He says:

Even falsehood has the

nature of truth, if it
confers a benefit that is
free from blemish. (292)

According to him, truth is not in the statement itself. It is not in its verifiability. Truth is in the consequence of what is said. It is linked to the circumstances; to the value system of an individual, a society. There is no absolute truth or absolute falsehood in day-to-day life. Even falsehood is in the nature of truth if it confers a benefit free from blemish. It is a down-to-earth, absolutely practicable definition of truth and will be valid in any society in any age.

As we said earlier, according to Valluvar, one of the two prominent virtues is Non-killing. But consider the duties of a king. There may be criminals and evil persons who are charged with murder, treason or equally serious offences. What does the king do in such a situation? Can he practise non-killing as part of his virtue? Valluvar says that for a king awarding capital punishment to these people is exactly the same as a farmer removing the weeds in the fields.

One may quote numerous instances where Valluvar lays down the norms for establishing the ideal society but makes such corrections as necessary for implementation. But at the same time the corrections are such as they will not detract from the basic ideals that he has in his mind for a healthy society.

8. Conclusion

The Kural does not have the advantage of being a religious scripture to command an unquestioning faith of certain followers. It is not the message of God nor is it a message from any of his incarnations. It is not a piece of literature nor an epic dealing with love and heroism. It is a treatise on the `Art of Living' born out of the culture of the Tamil society. It is the contribution of a genius that the Tamil country has produced. Valluvar has the background of civilisation and culture that he has inherited; the learning that he has acquired. He has examined all aspects of life; analysed it in its details and complexities; considered those that are fleeting and those that are enduring and endeavoured to extract the essence and presented it as a treatise on the art of living. The basis for its

immortal and universal appeals is to be seen in its secular character, clarity of thought, depth of understanding, perception of the unshifting foundations of human life, penetrating insight into the essentials and his capacity to present them in an extremely generalised form, avoiding carefully any particularisation.

We may concede the uniqueness of the Kural; we may admire the sound wisdom and depth of understanding of the world that Valluvar has shown in the work. It is remarkable. We must still keep in mind two imporant facts:

* The Kural cannot be an answer to all the questions of today and tomorrow.

* We cannot also take for granted that everyone of the 1,330 couplets written about 2,000 years ago will be relevant and applicable in letter and spirit today and tomorrow.

These are rather obvious; they do not warrant any explanation or proof. Nevertheless, it is considered necessary to emphasize this aspect.

Valluvar was progressive, far-sighted, and penetrating in his approach. He could analyse the components and sub-systems that go to make the system of human society; can see those that are enduring and those that are ephemeral and liable to change. He can extract from the million aspects of human life what may be considered the essence: but still he cannot free himself from the impact of the age in which he lived; traces of them are bound to be seen. To expect anyone to liberate oneself totally from the influence of one's age and environment without even a trace is impractical.

The Kural is a book that the Tamils must study in greater depth; let the rest of the country and the world know more of it. It is an essential part of the heritage, not only of the Tamil land but the country as a whole. The book in a way also bears evidence to the height of civilisation and culture as well as intellectual attainments that humanity had reached nearly 2000 years ago. Perhaps the discussion may be concluded with the following observations of K.M. Munshi :

In its essence, Tirukkural is a treatise par excellence on the art of living. Tiruvalluvar, the author, diagnoses the intricacies of human natue with such penetrating insight, perfect mastery and

consummate skill absorbing the most subtle concepts of modern psychology, that one is left wondering at his sweep and depth. His prescriptions, leavened by godliness, ethics, morality and humaneness are sagacious and practical to the core. They cut across castes, creeds, climes and ages and have a freshness which makes one feel as if they are meant for the present times.

Notes

1. *Tirukkural* is also referred to as the *Kural* and the author *Tiruvalluvar* as *Valluvar.*

2. The 1330 couplets have been grouped into units of ten couplets each and each unit is given a heading. By `chapter' we refer to such units.

3. The 133 chapters are grouped under these there broad `sections'.

4. The numbers given within brackets identify the kurals being quoted

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SITUATING PRECOLONIAL TAMIL POLITICS AND SOCIETY

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Recent findings and interpretations on a set of major issues in the study of the Indian past have moved me to attempt to trace the extended dialectical formation of communities and states in the subcontinent. In this paper I shall attempt to relate evidence pertaining to the history of the Tamil people to a more general formulation.

There has been the accumulation of important research findings on the premodern or precolonial period which has not made its way into our general understandings. The new evidence to which I refer includes the following : on pre-and proto-history and questions of archaic urbanization; new formulations about early medieval india; revisionistic conceptions about the Indian eighteenth century which shatter much of the received wisdom about the Mughal period; the evidence of class formation in the eighteenth century and especially the emergence of indigenous bourgeoises and petty-bourgeoises; and the compellingly clear and dangerous communalism of recent times, whose origins and morphology require urgent attention.

As a first step in delineating the long conjoined history of states and communities in the subcontinent, I propose the following chronology:

(a) communities without states from BC 7,000 to 800;

(b) communities *as* states (mahajanapadas) from BC 800 to 300 AD when the Gupta monarchy was founded ;

(c) communities *and* states, AD 300 to 1700 ; and

(d) states without communities, from 1700 to the present, when the historic conception of 'community' had been reduced from what had been historically vital and changing community formations to corticated shells of ideology.

I have suggested that 'community' should not be taken to mean caste or religion in the usual usage by historians and social scientists of India: rather it denotes people who live in some particular place and only secondarily a people who share some common quality apart from co-residence, such as a caste or religious affiliation, Nor does 'state' mean the sort of unitary political formation that informs our usual social science sense about the political order ; 'states' are taken here to be polities of whatever degree of centralized authority and power, that stand conceptually and empirically apart from and are often constituted by communities. It must be recognized that there is always have some form of political institutionalization in communities: chiefs, elders, priests or some such ; when these communal authorities are assimilated within encompassing political formations, through state service and other means, then states may be deemed to exist even as communal leaders retain (and often even fortify) their communal bases of authority. The distinction as well as the inter-relationship which I am drawing here between community and state is obviously related to the conception of 'segmentary state' of which I have made use.

The conception of complex communities persisting over extended time and space forced itself upon me some years ago when, in Paris, I visited the superb exhibition on the microlithic site of Mehrgarh, near the Bolan Pass. Dating from around BC 7,000, this site completely overturned the problematic of the pre- and proto-history of the subcontinent. It had long been held that the urban phase in the northwest was preceded by so shallow a pre-urban era that the cities of the Indus-Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa-must have been colonies of Mesopotamian city-states of the third millennium BC. Civilization was thought then to have been introduced into the subcontinent in these western Asian colonies. This colonization explanation is now suspected, if not rejected; now the long delay in the appearance of urban forms required explanation. Moreover, Mehrgarh is seen to have been linked to other pre-urban sites in the northwest through pottery typologies and signs of extensive trade networks and contact between Central Asia and Baluchistan suggesting a wholly new sequencing of pre-history.

Among the newer views of scholars of Harappan culture is the idea that complex chieftaincies rather than unified states were the prevailing political form and that some of these urban places-simultaneously and successively-were actually independently governed 'gateways' to agrarian and pastoral hinterlands and points of trade, rather than imperial capitals. And, the Harappan phase is seen to have begun a dispersal around 2,000 BC as urban centres moved south and west into farming cultures of the Gangetic plain, Rajasthan and central and peninsular India. These were agrarian and iron-using communities and chiefdoms which eventually attained quite extensive form in the *janapada* organizations that can be dated certainly from around 800 BC and may have begun earlier.

Since the turn of the twentieth century Indology and Indian history has known a type of polity, dubiously and always within inverted commas, called 'republic'. These so-called 'republics' are far better designated : communities *as* states, or, *janapada*, a more useful term : for a shorter temporal range, the term *mahajanapada* is also appropriate. In some reckonings, these communities as states arose as early as 1500 BC and lasted until BC 500, but for most scholars, an earlier time is allotted, from about BC 800 to the time of Kautilya's *Arthasastra*, conventionally dated in the fourth century BC. Clan-based polities have been identified from the Pali sources of early Buddhist and from Jaina texts : other sources, such as the *Mahabharata*, the *Arthasastra*, and to Panini's *Ashtadhyayi* add to this and also shift the ground of investigation to northeastern Indian during the sixth to fourth century B.C.

Janapadas and mahajanapadas were seldom monarchical. According to R. S. Sharma and some other historians of ancient India, the social key of these regimes is *gana*, glossed by the term 'tribe', though Sharma sought to reduce any rigid kinship, or blood, affinity, choosing instead to take *gana* as an association of people living in the same area. Rulers derived their authority partly from clan affiliation and their corporate entitlements to status and property, and partly from individual merit. In such polities there might or might not be a man designated as king, *raja*, but if there were, he would apparently have been a creature of a council, selected by and responsible to them. Models for non-

monarchical governance could legitimately be dated from later-Vedic institutions like the *sabha* and *samiti,* and these are taken as the models for the 'Sixteen Mahajanapadas' known from later Vedic as well as from Jaina texts. Mahajanpadas are translated, variously, as: realm, state, domain, and political region. However, taking a somewhat more literal gloss and mindful of R. S. Sharma's distinctions (1965), I offer the gloss of 'great community', that is, a conjoint sense of people and place, the governance of which was often carried out by sophisticated and religiously-legitimated collegial istitutions. For this reason, I identify a long era-from 800 BC to 300 AD-as one during which communities *were* states.

This raises important questions about the Mauryan state. In political terms, what is to be made of the vast territory delimited by the distribution of Ashokan edicts? If it is conceded that a new state formation came into being in the eastern Ganges during the third millennium BC, what of the rest of northern and peninsular India and why was it that no similar states were constructed along lines similar in ideology and in structure to the Mauryan state? Unless doubts such these can stilled, we are entitled to hold to the notion that communities *as* states continued to exist in much of the subcontinent until the founding of the Gupta regime? Then, it would seem, a different conception of monarchy took hold, one in which communities *and* monarchies formed the basis of state regimes.

But, is there not also the question of the Maurayans themselves: was theirs not a fundamentally different monarchy from those mahajanapada communities *as* states, and is that not what Romila Thapar (1984) is expressly arguing? In one sense that answer must certainly be yes: there was a profound difference and that was the ideological content of the hagemonic expressions of Ashoka. His inscriptions were long held to delineate the gigantic territory of the Mauryan kingdom, but that is less supposed these days; however, there is no question that these inscriptions must be seen as the expression of one of the great communities of Indian history, the Buddhist *sangha,* suggesting that the Mauryans were the apothesis of the community *as* state. The Mauryan kingdom failed to become a model for later states; this was the accomplishment of the Guptas, who

provided a template for a millennium of states by which, in part, we are able to define a medieval epoch in India. However, the Mauryans and before them the Magadha kings stimulated the development of state societies in South India.

The appearance of states there with the founding of the Pallava kindom during the AD sixth century owes much to the influence of external trade from the Gangetic basin as well as from the eastern Mediterranean. Beginning in the Megalithic period of South India's Iron Age, and especially during the last half of the first millennium BC, an important shift from pastoral upland domination to the riverine plains occurred. Associated with this was the decline of an older elite of chiefly families in various parts of the South by a new elite formation; among Tamils the old chiefs who called themselves 'Velir' were superceded by three new chiefly lines *(muventar)* who adopted the names of Chola, Chera and Pandya and began kingdoms, for the term *ventar* is taken in anthologized texts of the Tamil Sangam to mean 'crowned king'. These kingships cannot have been much removed from the lineage structure from which they emerged when they were noticed in Ashokan inscriptions, but they surely consisted of complex sedentarized farming communities and some degree of commodity production, in the several riverine plains of the southern peninsula, in addition to retaining elements of an earlier pastoral society and economy. All of these are attested in the Tamil poetry as well as early foreign accounts of the southern coasts. The basis was laid then for the rise of the Pallavas who combined a strong foundation of tank-irrigated agriculture in the Palar basin with vigorous commercial involving Southeast Asia.

Differences between the northern kingdoms that succeeded the lineage based northern *janapadas,* described by Thapar, and the southern kingdoms to appear later, sprang from the different social substructure of the two regions. Core communities that formed the heartland of the Mauryans and their successors in the north were the farming villages of the Ganges basin. Between the border of Bengal and the Ganga-Yamuna doab a single, extended riverine environment supported a homogeneous structure of communities; villages of this region were described by Manu, in the AD second century as aggregated into groups on the base ten while later inscriptions spoke of groups of twelve and units

implying a high degree of homogeneity. Southern communities were more variegated; most, except in some parts of the river valleys, retained a balance of sedentary and pastoral relations constituting ecotypic cores and peripheries in any community, and settlement units were accordingly more varied. Another informing difference was the sea and the advanced commerce that, together with the intrusive commerce of the Mauryans into Karnataka, acted as a catalyst for the development of the southern kingdoms of Tamilnadu and Karnataka.

While a shared element between North and South was the reassertion of Brahmanical religious authority of Puranic Hinduism, the fate of Jainism and Buddhism, long the regnant religious forms of the subcontinent, the manner of that reassertion and the signification to be attached to it differ between North and South. All accounts of the Gupta age emphasize the continued presence of Jaina and Buddhist institutions and the continuation of important writings in both. Jainism continued to flourish in Bengal, along with Buddhism, for many centuries after the Guptas, whereas Buddhism began its long decline in most places owing partly as a result of the destruction of Hunic invasions in the Northwest and perhaps also as a result of the incorporation by revived Vishnu worship of the Lord Buddha as an avatar and the practice of intermarriage among Buddhist and Vaishnava and Saiva devotees in some of the great families of the time, including royals. In contrast with this peaceful displacement of Jainism and Buddhism in the North was the violent suppression of both by devotees of the new devotional worship of Siva in the South, and the proud boast of the new kings of the Pallava and Pandyan kingdoms that they had slaughtered Jainas. This has always embarrassed modern historians, but it has not moved them to offer explanations for these murderous claims.

One explanation that suggests itself for this violence pertains to different ways in which commerce and communities were structured in the southern peninsula. Jainism, along with Buddhism, can be taken as an ideology of transactionalism, a religious tradition whose core teachings are atheistic and ethical and whose social practices of moderation and conservancy found favour with merchants. Pragmatic interactions governed by codes of decency were preferred by them over the profligate

norms of social interactions and ritual associated with caste behaviour of even those devoted to bhakti worship. In Karnataka, where Jainism enjoyed a very long prominence as a major religion, and attracted considerable royal patronage, it was as a legacy of early Magadhan and Mauryan trade via the famous Dakshinapatha route from the Gangetic plain. This Commercial connection continued during and after medieval times, and it was through the Karnatak commercial connection that Gangetic products continued to find their way into the South. For reasons that are less clear, but might reflect a dimension of this close contact with the Gangetic basin, numerical designations for village clusters were widely used in ancient and medieval Karnataka (but nowhere else in the southern peninsula) in the manner that they were in the Gangetic plain according to the Manusmriti of about the AD second century and to the early medieval inscriptions of the thirteenth century. Jainas with their transactional ideology found niches in this Karnatak culture that was refused them among Tamils after the AD sixth century.

The invention of devotional practice and theology in the worship of Siva and Vishnu among Tamils was conterminous with the establishment of the new kingdoms of the Pallava and the resurgence of one of the old *muventar,* the Pandyans. Bhakti Hinduism was made a central ideological element in both of these kingdoms. Not only were its kings presented as devotees of the Puranic gods and generous beneficiaries of them and their Brahman priests through construction of temples and grants of *brahmadeya* lands, but this claim was made in conjection with another claim of having defeated evil kings devoted to Buddhism. Such royal claims, of central importance for Tamil state formation, reinforce the notion suggested above about the importance of the revived Hinduism as an ideology of place. If it is appropriate to speak of Jainism and Buddhism as ideologies of transactionalism, as also suggested above, then it must by even more acceptable to see place/territoriality as the salient political element of the bhakti. In this there is a persuasive fit between the structuring of communities among Tamils and the form of religion Tamil made their own after the AD sixth century.

Much depends on noting the composition of most landed communities from that time until nearly a millennium later, during

the time of the Vijayanagara kingdom. Beginning in the pre-state, pre-Pallavan era, localitites consisted of combinations of variable ecotypic zones, from a simple upland / pastoral and plains / agricultural to more complex combinations of substantial wet zones, fed by rivers or tanks, zones of mixed wet and dry cultivation and pasturages and herdsmen at the peripheries. In a few areas, such as portions of the Kaveri, Vaigai and Tambraparni basins, extended zones of irrigated cultivation made for considerable uniformity and the possibility of replications of localities (termed *valanadu*) resembling practice of numerical clustering the Gangetic basin; but that was exceptional. For the most part, community identity was constructed culturally by religious affiliations, through temples housing gods of particular places who were patronized by specific landed groups, including their chiefs, who might be organized into discrete territorial hierarchies under great chiefly houses, such as those of Kongunadu as described by Brenda Beck for modern Coimbatore (Beck: 1972; Stein: 1984). This and the related processes involving communities and commerce as well as the formation of state regimes set the foundations for early medieval state and society, where new configurations of community and state emerged.

Characterizing the politics of the medieval age remains difficult. Most of us who argue about the issue agree that it is essential to take into account both formal state forms-however we designate them - and a civil society that is still localized, or, as I would say, `communalized' in the manner of political regimes that seem to have become general around Gupta times, and about which I speak of as `communities *and* states'.

This I take to be the starting condition for Chattopadhyaya's influential formulations about the early medieval of a few years ago (Chattopadhyaya: 1983). He has asserted that our thinking about historical changes in polity are fixated upon a dichotomy between the `unitary empire' and `constituent state' forms as these are manifest in the fourth century.

Of the early medieval state, he observes that the technological basis for something like a single subcontinental state was plainly non-existent, which presumes that notions about such a Mauryan or Gupta state are wrong. He notes that as late as the eleventh century there were about forty ruling

houses in the subcontinent. The constitutiveness of Chattopadhyaya's `constituent state' depend a good deal upon ideology and Brahmans. One element of this ideology was `state society', the idea that the state was in and part of society as well as outside of and regulative of society. The spread of the idea of state society was the work of Brahmans: cult leaders, ritual cognicenti, and priestly custodians of the numerous sacred centres that had begun to exist in early medieval times. Brahmans were also involved in yet another aspect of things, another of the set of social transformations that with religious ones mark the age: expanding agrarian settlement and production and caste institutions - Brahmans were again crucial agents.

Chattopadhyaya's notion of `state' was not simply a smaller scale of unitary polities, empires in miniature, but rather systems cognate with feudal ones. He differentiates himself carefully from upholders of `Indian feudalism' while expressing qualified agreement with formulations of `fragmentary' polities by Kulke, and `segmentary' conceptions by me in the sense that in all three salience is given to the formation and structural importance of communities - localized and integrated systems of social, cultural, economic and political relations and institutions. Communities are seen in something of balanced relations with states. Sometimes, as in the case of the Rajputs and the Orissan kinglets discussed by Chattopadhyaya and Kulke (1986, ch. 3), states emerge directly from previous clan/communal formations; and sometimes, as in the case of the Cholas about whom I wrote, imperial-like states emerged from localistic chiefdoms and endure without eliminating that same stratum of their provenance. I call this the politics of communities *and* states, and I see this form dominating Indian politics until the eighteenth century, when the differentiated modern state comes into being in the subcontinent and with that the gradual decline of communities into shells of an ideological sort.

This was a gradual development. During the Mughal age, localized community institutions of clan, sect and caste often embraced tens of thousands of people. Communities were stratified in various ways, reflecting ideologies of divine and royal honour and service and caste and blood ties; the structure of local communities was a complex of multiple, intersecting and cross-

cutting relationship such as to create multiplex identities for family- and for individual-sharers of collective property. Extensive exchange relations traced a logic of re-distribution according to differential `honour' and `status'; and localized communities performed juridical and political functions deemed to be appropriately theirs.[1]

Medieval polities of northern India could not be centralized and transformed from above, even by the powerful Mughals, not least because the Mughals failed to develop a bureaucratic structure beyond the patrimonial form (Blake: 1979). On the contrary, the Mughal regime was being transformed by developments from below, where local and regional institutions and rulers came into conflict with and undermined imperial authority, as shown by Muzaffar Alam (1986). In Southern, Western and, to a degree, Eastern India, a noticeable feature, perhaps dating back to the late medieval period, but becoming clearer by the seventeenth century, was the rise of local `lordships' or `little kingships' out of community institutions (Stein: 1989; Dirks: 1987; Ludden: 1985). In the North, where the Mughal Empire came to rest upon and to utilise prior kingships based upon the clan structures of predatory Rajput warriors, the case was rather different. Because they were never expunged by Mughal authority, the reemergence of those community-based polities ultimately transformed the Mughal polity. I say `ultimately' because political developments took a long and twisting path beset by countless contingencies. The tendencies towards lordship existed at several different levels of the system, creating tension and conflict between regional and local would-be kings: resultant tensions and conflicts worked themselves out in different patterns in different places. And, if what Christopher Bayly has termed the inruption of `the tribal fringe' can be said to have created a crucial conjuncture with the other processes impinging on state formation in the North, then something as similarly shaping was occurring in the South, amongst Tamils and others. This was the impact of expanded trade as a result of Europeans during the seventeenth century and later. From the later seventeenth century, large numbers of lightly-armed, fast- moving Central Asian cavalrymen percolated into the north Indian plains, looking for military work or to found kingdoms of their own. They were widely available for hire by would - be lords (whom they sometimes subsequently

displaced) and their military techniques partially transformed the nature of warfare in South Asia, undermining the supremacy previously attached to the heavy cavalry and siege equipment of the central Mughal armies (Bayly: ch. 1; Barnett: 1980). The new military cutting edge supplied by the tribal influx made it possible for often communally - founded lordships to emancipate themselves further from the final sanctions of Mughal terror.

Similar in structural importance in Tamil country and elsewhere in the peninsula was the availability of trade - related financing for building post - Vijayanagara states in the Tamil country. The account of Sanjay Subrahmanyam's writings of a few years ago (1988, 1990) is important here.

In a position which rejects well - established interpretations of precolonial trade within and beyond Coromandel, Subrahmanayam offers an explanation of how politics and commerce related in a symbiotic way in the formation of states from Vijayanagara times until well into colonial times. He examines a set of careers of what he has dubbed `portfolio capitalists', the famous family of Achyutappa Chetti, a Telugu Balija who settled in Tamil country and who, along with his descendants, played a major role in the high trade of Coromandel as well as in state finance during the seventeenth century. `Portfolio capitalists' were those who combined ordinary and extraordinary, international trade with tax farming and with executing occasional offices for rulers.

What emerged from these processes by the eighteenth century in terms of authority and property right was a very different kind of state for all that it sometimes tried to hark back to the Mughal past. Perhaps the strongest consolidation of state authority occurred where regional cultures and political traditions were rooted in former Mughal provincial governorships or surviving medieval Hindu kingships. Rulers here sought to deepen and extend their claims to rights and resources over and within community institutions and over local magnates sustained by those institutions. Effective demands for tax and tribute escalated and royal institutions sought to dominate and extract resources from commerce on a new scale, not least to pay for the mercenary armies on which rulers now depended (Stein: 1985; Bayly: ch. 2; Wink: 1986).

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the effects of all this on concepts of property, right and the state were considerable, for Tamils as well as for others. On the one hand, and obviously, these states sought to centralize their authority and control of resources as never before, confiscating or claiming power over much that previously had been held under community tenure. Yet two problems stood in the way of the realisation of this `dream of despotism' (dreamt most fully, perhaps, by Tipu Sultan of Mysore, who proposed nothing less than a total state economy). The first problem was, once more, lack of a bureaucratic apparatus beyond the patrimonial form. This meant that the administration of `royal power' tended to be farmed out, usually for cash, to merchants, bankers and local notables within community institutions.[2] There were rarely difficulties in finding such finanical agents: the new and expanding claims of royal power, besides providing lucrative perquisites, could be used by moneymen to wrench control of rights and resources from community institutions and to divert the resulting cash flows away from redistributionist ends and into their own pockets. In Maharashtra, Frank Perlin (1978) has seen in the seventeenth century the rise of `great households' of administrators, including the Bhonsle house of Shahji and Shivaji, by bundling together collections of rights drawn both from `the king' and from community institutions. Such entitlements were administered promiscuously within the economy of their own household. Research on Bengal, the South and Punjab has noted similar developments.[3]

Excursions into the seventeenth and eighteenth century worlds of Shivaji and of Tipu Sultan is a place to close this excursus into politics and society in precolonial Tamil country and the dialectic between communities and states. The final stage of that development is where community is divested of all purpose and meaning save ideological ; for that a contextualizing of social and political relations within a class frame is required, and that can only be sketched in the briefest of terms (Stein, 1991).

NOTES

1. The nature of communitarian rights and institutions has been most explored in the context of South India: see B. Stein,

"Peasants, Politics and the Deconstruction of Feudalism in Medieval India", *Journal Peasant Studies* 12, 1985; also N. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown* (Cambridge, 1987) : A. Appadurai, *Worship and Conflict* (Cambridge, 1982), ch. 1. : but also see: in the context of Rajput clans, R. Fox, *Kin, Clan, Raja and Rule* (Berkeley, 1971) and in the context of North Indian priestly sects, C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars* (Cambridge, 1983), ch. 4.

2. In Bayly's phrase, "the commercialisation of royal power", (Bayly, 1983, c. 2)

3. F. Perlin, `State Formation Re-considered' *Modern Asian Studies* 19, 1985, a general discussion of these relations, under the concept of "Portfolio Capitalism", can be found in S. Subrahmanyam and C. Bayly, (eds), "State, Markets and Merchants in Early Modern India", special issue of *Indian Social and Economic History Review*, 25, 1988.

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ASPECT AND VARIABILITY IN TAMIL

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Tamil has a number of verbs, sometimes referred to as `aspectual verbs'[1] that are added to a main or lexical verb to provide semantic distinctions such as duration, completion, habituality, regularity, continuity, simultaneity, definiteness, expectation of result, remainder of result, current relevance, benefaction, antipathy, and certain other notions.

Researchers have generally found these aspectual verbs difficult to describe in a categorical way, and not until a Annamalai 1981 has any attempt been made to treat aspect in Tamil (or for that matter, any Dravidian language) as a *variable* component of the grammar. In what follows I would like to summarize what has been discovered about aspect in Tamil and place it in a framework that recognizes both variability and the process of *grammaticalization,* that is, how a category becomes grammaticalized in a given language. I would like to show that Tamil aspect is a category that is on the road to grammaticalization. Some aspectual verbs are already, as it were, at their destination, others are proceeding with all deliberate speed toward that goal, but some are straggling, some have gotten lost, and some are only just beginning to pack for the journey. I would like to show that aspect is a variable category within the grammar of a given speaker, but is also variable across dialects and idiolects, and between literary Tamil (LT)[2] and Spoken Tamil (ST). Finally some words about aspect as a feature of the Indian Linguistic Area (Emeneau 1956) are probably in order.

Tamil aspectual verbs provide commentary about the *manner* in which an action occurred, especially how it began or ended, whether it was intentional or unintentional, whether it had an effect on the speaker or on someone else, and so on. Some of these notions are what have been considered aspectual in other languages (having to do with the completion or non-completion, the continuity or duration, the manner of inception or completion) but some have little or no relation semantically to classical notions of aspect. These `extended' uses of aspectual verbs sometimes therefore involve value judgments by the speaker about the

actions of others, i.e. they indicate what the speaker's **attitude** about the verbal action in question is.

Most aspectual verbs are derived historically[3] from some lexical verb that is still in use in Tamil but has its own lexical meaning. The `meaning' of aspectual verbs is primarily grammatical or syntactic and can usually only be related vestigially to the lexical meaning of the verb from which it is derived.

Syntactically, aspectual verbs are added to the adverbial participle (AVP)[4] of the lexical (`main') verb. Aspectual verbs then are marked for tense and PNG, since the AVP preceding them cannot be so marked. Morphologically they then act identically to the lexical verb from which they are derived, i.e. take the tense markers etc. of the class of lexical verb they are identical to.

1. Aspect and Markedness.

Since in Tamil aspect is an optional rather than an obligatory category, aspect must be seen as a polarity of marked versus unmarked. The lack of occurrence of an aspectual verb indicates that the aspectual notion that is not present is unmarked, or neutral, rather than absent. That is, a sentence that contains a completive marker, such as *(v)iḍu,* surely marks completive aspect, but its absence is not a 'zero' marker for non-completion, the way absence of a plural marker in English is a `zero' marker of singularity. Absence of a completive aspectual verb does not indicate that there was no completion, but simply that it is unmarked, and therefore vague, for completion.

Tamil (and other Dravidian languages) differ from, e.g., English in this respect, since it seems to be the case that English speakers share the presupposition that an action is completed unless otherwise stated, whereas Tamil speakers seem to share the presupposition that an action is not completed unless stated as definitely complete. Thus a sentence like `I went to the library yesterday' seems odd if followed by `but I never got there.' Rather, the first sentence would have to be replaced by something like `I *started out* for the library yesterday' if it is to be followed by `but I never got there.' In Tamil, in contrast, the analogous sentence *naan neettu laybreerikki pooneen* is not strange if

followed by *aanaa, pooy seeralle* (I never arrived.) since *pooneen*[1] I went' is unmarked for completion - it declares simply that motion away from the addressee occurred.

However, if *pooneen* were changed to add aspectual *(v)idu,* i.e. *pooytteen* then adding *aanaa, pooy seeralle* is odd.

2. Primarily aspectual verbs.

The aspectual verbs that are primarily aspectual (and minimally attitudinal) are *(v)idu* `completive', *kittiru* `durative', *vayyi* `future utility', *aaku* `finality, expected result', *vaa* *`iterative', poo* `change of state', *iru* $_1$ `perfect', *iru* $_2$. `result remains', and *iru* $_3$ `epistemic.'[5]

The aspectal verbs that are primarily attitudinal (but nonetheless aspectual) are *tallu* `distributive', `exdeictic',[6] *tole* `riddance', *poodu* `malicious intent', and some others that very from dialect to dialect.[7] Finally, there is *koo* `self-benefactive', that displays more versatility than almost any other AM except possibly *iru* `be; perfect; epistemic; suppositional'. It displays both aspectual and attitudinal semantics, and is perhaps the most redically different in phonology from its lexical analog of all the AM's.

2.1 Primarily Aspectual Verbs.

2.1.1 *(v)idu* `completive'.

This aspectual verb adds a notion that an action was, is, or will be complete or definite. It is similar to aspectual verbs in other languages (Russian, Hindi, etc.) that impart the notion of *`perfective'* (not *perfect*). Its lexical correlate is *vidu* `leave, let.'[8] Examples:

(1) *avan pooyttaan*

he went-compl-PNG

`he went away; he's definitely gone'

(2) *naan vand-idreen*

I come-compl-pres-PNG

`I am definitely coming; I'll come for sure.'

(3) *avane anuppuccuḍu*

him send-caus-compl-imp

`Send him away; get rid of him'

(4) *ade saappiṭṭuṭṭeen*

it-acc eat-compl-past-PNG

`I ate it all up'

2.1.2 *vayyi* `future utility'

`put away, put somewhere for safekeeping'. The aspectual verb *vayyi*[9] has a lexical analog *vayyi* `take, put s.t. somewhere for safekeeping'. It is usually used with transitive main verbs only (since the MV *vayyi* is definitely transitive,) but may occur with some intransitive verbs, such as *siri* `laugh' (see example below). Other aspectual verbs (e.g. *(v)idu*) may follow *vayyi,* but when present *vayyi* always follows immediately after the AVP of the main verb. The aspectual notion conveyed by *vayyi* is the notion that some action is performed because it will have future consequences, use or benefit; it is often translatable as `in reserve' or `up', e.g. `stock up (on)', `read up (on) something, `study up on something', `lay in (or up) a stock of (something)', and implies that an action is done with an eye to future consequences, or preemptively. In the examples below, the glossed portion within square brackets is not literally present in the Tamil sentence, but is given as one or more of the consequences that the use of *vayyi* implies.

(5) *taṇṇiire kuḍiccu veppoom*

water-acc drink FUTUTIL-fut-1pl

`We will tank up on water' [We will drink our fill of water so as to avoid future thirst.]

(6) *ammaa piḷḷeṅgaḷukku doose suṭṭu-veccaa*

mother children-dat pancake heat-FUTUTIL-past-3sgfm

`The mother made dosas for the children [to eat later]'. `The mother cooked up some dosas [to have ready] for the children [to eat later].'

(7) *pooliiskitte edeyaavadu olari-vekkaadee*

police-to something-or-other babble-FUTUTIL-neg-imp

'Don't go blabbing anything to the police [to get yourself into even more hot water later].'

(8) *naan naaye katti-vekkalle*

I dog-acc bind-FUTUTIL-neg

'I neglected to tie up the dog [and keep it from biting people, messing up people's yards, etc.]'

(9) *sundaram tan makalukku nalla edattle kalyaanam*

Sundaram his daughter-dat nice place-loc marriage

senju-veccaar

did-FUTUTIL-past-3sg-epic

'Sundaram got his daughter married off well [i.e., nicely set up for the future].'

(10) *talevar kuuttatte talli-veccaar*

head-person assemblance-acc push-FUTUTIL-past-3sg-epic

'The chairman postponed the meeting.'

(11) *dairektar oru jook sonnaar; naan siriccu vecceen*

Director a joke said; I laugh FUTUTIL-past-1sg

'The Director told a joke, and I laughed [dutifully, just in case.]'

(12) *Kalyaana viittle tummi kimmi veccidaatee*

marriage house-loc sneeze ECHOREDUP FUTUTIL-compl-neg-imp.

'Don't do anything stupid like sneeze or anything during the wedding ceremony [and bring bad omens].'

2.1.3 *aaku* 'expected result; finality'

This aspectual verb has the lexical analog *aaku* 'become.' It is usually found only in the neuter past, i.e. *aaccu*. Suffixed to

a main verb it expresses the notion that the action was expected, or occurred after a long wait, or as a regularly expected occurrence.

(13) *poosṭ vand-aaccu*

mail came-XPRESLT

'The mail has come [as it usually does by this time of day]'.

(14) *inta kaṇakkukaḷ-ellaam paatt-aaccu*

this bills-all seen-XPRESLT

'These bills have all been checked [as they were supposed to have been].'

(15) *saappiṭṭ-aaccaa?*

eat-XPRESLT-Q

'Have you eaten? [as you ought to have, given the time of day]'

2.1.4 *vaa* 'iterative; connected continuity'.

The aspectual verb *vaa* has a lexical analog *vaa* which of course means 'come'. The notion conveyed by aspectual *vaa* is that an occurrence is or was of longstanding duration, but more as a series of connected events (or waves of occurrences) rather than as uninterrupted continuity. (The latter is expressed by kondiru) *vaa* may often express a kind of 'narrative' or 'historial' (or perhaps even 'mythological') past, describing an action that was common practice in a past time. Since it is only used in LT, the example(s) below are in LT rather than ST[10]

(16) *(LT) anta kaalattil intiyaavil aneeka aracarkaḷ aaṇṭu vantaarkaḷ*

those times-in India-in many kings-rule ITERAT-past-3pl

'In those times, many kings were ruling in India.'

2.1.5 *poo* 'change of state'

The aspectual verb *poo* resembles the lexical verb *poo* 'go' in its morphology. It is used to express the notion that a change of state has definitely taken place (or will definitely occur). As

such it is aspectually completive but the main verbs to which it is attached always themselves have some semantic notion of change; the addition of *poo* shows that the change is complete. Usually the net result is also judged to be unfortunate or undesirable.

(17) *avan settu poonaan*
he died CHGOFST
'He died. [He is definitely dead, alas]'

(18) *adu kettu pooccu*
it spolied CHGOFST
'It got spoiled.'

(19) *tuniyellaam kaanju pookum*
clothes-all dry CHGOFSTntr-fut
'The clothes will all get dry.'

2.2 Primarily attitudinal aspectual verbs.

The aspectual verbs that express, in addition to various aspectual notions, notions about the speaker's **attitude** towards actions or other speakers, are, as mentioned *tallu* 'distributive', *tole* 'riddance', *poodu* 'malicious intent', and others that we will mention only in passing.

2.2.1 *tallu* 'distributive', 'riddance', 'exdeixis'

The main verb that this AV is derived from is *tallu* 'push, shove.' In addition to its basic aspectual notion implying completion, *tallu* also gives the notion that an action 'got rid of' something; this may range from the satisfaction of having cleaned up some sort of mess to that of giving all one's wealth to the poor. There is also the notion that the recipients of this distribution are unspecified. That is, a sentence like *raaman pustakaṅgale koduttu tallinaan* 'Raman gave away his books' will not have a dative-marked recipient.

(20) *naan anda kadidatte padiccu talneen*
I that letter-acc read EXDEIX
'I read that letter [and got the task out of the way, over with.]

(21) *avan adutta viittukkaaran vaangna kadane erudi talnaan*

he next house-person taken loan-acc wrote EXDEIX

`He wrote off [as a bad debt] the loan [taken, i.e.] owed [him] by his next-door negihbor.'

(22) *raajaa tan panatte kudutta talnaan.*

king money-acc give EXDEIX

`The king gave away all his money.

2.2.2 *poodu* `malicious intent'

This verb has an analogous lexical verb *poodu* which means `put, drop; serve (food)' or `put on' clothes. There is a semantic notion of some lack of care with this verb, so if deliberate careful placing or setting is intended, *vayyi* is used instead. This verb is appropriate as used for serving food, since in order to avoid contact (and ritual pollution), food is often `dropped' on the plate, rather than placed carefully. The AV *poodu* varies semantically more than some AV's; for many the notion conveyed is that of bad faith, bad motives, or even malicious intent. Annamalai (1985) calls this AV the verb of *casualness*; for him the main notion is that speakers attribute motives of `lack of care, inconsiderateness' etc. to others when using this AV. For others the main notion implied by the use of *poodu* is that speakers think of other speakers' motives as involving careless disregard for the likes and desires of others, malice, etc. When bad motives are being attributed, the most felicitious English translations for these AV's are with expletives or pejorative adjectives, etc.

(23) *neettu varakkuudaadu-nnu sonneenee. aanaa,*
neettu
paattu

yesterday come-neg-necess-QT said -emph. but, yesterday seeing

vandu-poottaanga.

came-MALICE-tense-PNG

`I told them not to come yesterday, but they deliberately came **anyway** [the jerks!]'

(24) *tirudanga en naaye konnupoottaanga*

thieves my dog-acc kill-MALICE-tense-PNG

'[Those dirty rotten] thieves [deliberately and in cold blood] went and killed my dog.'

(25) korande taale kiriccu poottadu
child paper-acc tear MALICE-tense-PNG

'The child [carelessly] tore the paper.'

(26) *avan ajaakkradeyaa kadave tirandu poottuttu*
he carelessly door-acc opened MALICE
pooyirukkaan
go-Perf-PNG

'He has gone out, carelessly leaving the door ajar.'

2.2.3 *tole* 'impatience, disgust'

This verb is related to the lexical verbs *tole* 2 intr 'come to an end, die be ruined' and *tole* 6b tr, 'finish, exhaust, destroy, kill, rout'. There is a nominalization of this verb *tolle,* which means 'trouble, care, vexation, perplexity'. The use of the AV *tole* expresses the speaker's impatience or even disgust with another person's actions, and in some cases, even their general personal attributes. In English this would also often be translated by some expletive, or pejorative adjective ('the dumb kid', 'the rotten bastard').[11] Even though this AV expresses impatience and disgust and must be used with caution, it does not necessarily express lack of respect, since it may be used by wives to husbands, with politeness markers. When so used, the antipathy is toward the event rather than the person.

(27) *tiisas innum mudiccu-tolekkalleyaa?*

thesis still finish-IMPAT-neg-Q

'Haven't you finished [that troublesome] thesis yet [slowpoke]?'

(28) *pooy-tole, engeyaavadu pooy-tole*

go-IMPAT-imp, somewhere go-IMPAT-imp

'Oh all right go on, go, go somewhere, [what the hell].'

(29) *ate saappittuttu pooy-tolenga!*

it-acc eat-compl go-IMPAT-polimp

`[Please] eat it and go! [or there'll be even more botheration.]

(30) *kaaru tondaravu koduttu-kittirundadu;*

ade car trouble give-durative; it-acc

vittu toleccutteen

abandon-IMPAT-compl-past-PNG

`My car was giving me trouble; I sold the [dumb] thing [and was finished with it].

(31) *avan sondakkaaranaa veeru irundu tolekkraan*

he kinsman-adv moreover be-IMPAT-pres-PNG

`He happens to be a relative of mine [so there's no way to get out of helping the jerk.]

(32) *ellaarum biir kudikka num -nnaanga*

everyone beer drink must they-said.

naanum kudiccu

I-also drink tolecceen

-IMPAT-past-PNG

`Everyone was [expected to be] drinking beer [which I don't like], [but] I drank some too [to avoid making a fuss].

(33) *avan namma visayatte dairaktarkitte solli-toleccittaan*

he our matter-acc director-to say-IMPAT-compl-past-PNG

`[Mr. Bigmouth] has blabbed (spilled the beans / let the cat out of the bag) about our [little] matter to the Director [and now there's hell to pay.]'

3. The aspectual verb koo.

One of the most complex of the Tamil aspectual verb is koo, derived from the lexical verb *kol-* which means `hold, contain'. In LT lexical *kol* occurs ussally with neuter subjects, i.e. sentences in which some*thing* holds or contains some*thing,* not someone. Lexical *koo* does occur as an AVP with verbs of motion poo `go' and vaa `come', and the combination *kondupoo* and *konduvaa*

mean `take (something)' (i.e. `hold and go') and `bring (something)' (i.e. `hold and come') respectively. Since lexical *kol* is a class I verb, with present koreen[12] past kiṭṭeen and future koveen, these are also the forms for aspectual koo. Its AVP is kiṭṭu. The phonology of the spoken form of this AV is much more different from its LT counterpart than could be predicted by regular historical or morphophonemic rules, and moreover varies tremendously from dialect to dialect; in some dialects there is a present form *kiḍraeen* and infinitive kiḍa that are back formations from the past kiṭṭu.

3.1. Aspectual distinctions

The aspectual verb *koo* can provide a number of aspectual distinctions to a sentence. Traditionally (Arden 1942 : 282 ff.) it is referred to as a 'reflexive ' verb, but this is hardly the best analysis of its meaning. Some of the notions provided by aspectual *koo* are:

1. Self-affective or self-benefactive action. 14

2. Simultaneous action: one action occurring together with another action; sometimes these actions are wholly coterminous, but at other times it merely states that some portion of the time of the two actions overlapped.

3. Completive aspect: indicates that an action is, has been, or will be definite and compete(d).

4. Inchoative vs. Punctual. koo is used with a number of stative verbs to indicate that a state has begun or been entered into.

5. Lexicalization. Sometimes koo has only marginal lexical or aspectual value of its own, and is attached to verb stems which no longer occur alone as bare stems.

6. Purposeful vs. accidental. The action was purposeful and volitional; or, (paradoxically) the action was accidental. This can only be judged by what would be considered culturally appropriate.

3.2 Self-affective or self-benefactive action.

Self-affective or self-benefactive action is an action or state that affects the subject of the sentence in some way,

usually to h. benefit, but sometimes not in any clearly beneficial way. (This is what has been called `reflexive' by other grammarians, but is not an adequate description of many of its uses.) Sometimes the benefaction is clearly for someone else, as in (5) below. Beyoned the benefaction, koo is essentially a completive aspect marker as well, since whatever else happens, the implication is that the action was definitely accomplished. Compare sentences with and without koo such as

kumaar veele teeḍinaan, aanaa keḍekkalle

`Kumar looked for a job, but didn't find one'.

and

kumaar veele teeḍikkittaan

`Kumar looked for a job and found one'

The latter implies completion, so cannot be followed by

... aanaa keḍekkalle

`. . . but didn't find one'

without contradition. Other examples [15] of uses of the AM koo are

(34) *payyan tanne aḍiccu-kiṭṭaan*

boy self-acc. beat-BENEF-past-PNG

`The boy hit himself'.

(35) *raaman saṭṭe pooṭṭu-koraan.*

Raman shirt-acc. put-BENEF-pres-PNG

`Raman dresses himself.'

(36) *naan paṇatte eḍuttu-kiṭṭeen.*

I money-acc take-BENEF-past-PNG

`I took the money for myself.'

(37) *niinga paattu-koonga!*

you see-BENEF-imp

`Watch out (for yourself)!'

(38) *nii korandengale paattu-kanum*
you children-acc see-BENEF-must
`You need to take care of (watch) the children.

(39) *kumaar nallaa nadandu-kittaan*
Kumar well conduct-BENEF-past-PNG
`Kumar behaved well.'

(40) *raamasaami mudiye vetti-kittaan*
Ramaswamy hair cut-BENEF-past-PNG
`Ramasamy cut his hair (on purpose)'.

(41) raamasaami kayye vetti-kittaan
Ramaswamy hand-acc cut-BENEF-past-PNG
`Ramasamy cut his hand (by accident)'.

If the third example did not have aspectual koo, i.e. were simply naan *panatte edutteen*, the meaning would be `I took the money (but not for myself, i.e. I transported it somewhere for someone else.') The accidental and volitional meanings of koo are somewhat problematical, since that last two examples above can also be reversed, i.e., *R. cut his hair by accident* and *R. cut his hand on purpose*, but since this is not what one usually expects of people, the expected result is the preferred interpretation. One might find a parallel to this in the English `aspectual commentary' verbal expressions `manage to vb' and `go and vb', e.g. `Ramasamy managed to cut himself in the hand' and `Ramasamy went and cut himslef in the hand'. In both of these the implication is that Ramasami is not very competent or not very much in control of his life, whereas `Ramasami managed to get his hair cut' implies that our incompetent Ramasami finally got his act together and got his hair cut. The decision as to whether an action was deliberate or accidental depends on how society valorizes the effect. In this case, South Asian society valorizes deliberate hair-cutting and devalorizes deliberate mutilation of one's body, unless done for religious reasons.

3.3 Simultaneity.

koo is often used as an AVP (kittu) attached to one or more non-finite verbs (AVP's) to indicate that those actions are

simultaneous with (either completely, or just partly) another action. Often English 'while' can be used to translate this. Sometimes simultaneity is explicitly emphasized by adding emphatic ee, as in (1) below. Examples :

(42) *naan saapittu-kittee vandeen.*

I eat-ing-emph came

'I was eating while I came.'

(43) seruppe pootu-kittu, kooyilukkulee pooka-kuudaadu.

shoe-acc wear-SIMUL temple-dat-postpos-emph go-must-neg-imp

'Do not go into a temple while wearing shoes.'

(44) oru kolakkareyle oru puli kanne muudıkkittu okkaand-irundadu.

a tank-bank-loc a tiger eye-acc closed-SIMUL sitting-was

'(While) its eyes (were) closed, a tiger was lying by the side of a tank.'

(LT) oru naal oru vyaabaari oru kaattuvariyee muutteye

one day a merchant a forest-path-emph/loc bundle-acc eduttu-kittu poonaan.

take-SIMUL went

'One day a merchant was going along a forest path, carrying a bunndle.'

Because of the multiple semantic interpretations of lexical and aspectual *koo*, it is sometimes possible to interpret it in various ways. Sometimes 'simultaneous' *koo* may be interpreted as 'self-affective', i.e. in example 2 above, *poottu-koo* could also mean 'wear' (this is one of those examples mentioned above where *koo* has become part of the stem of the lexical entry). The sentences in examples (1) and (4) could be either interpreted as the lexical verb *kondupoo* 'take (something)', as simultaneous *koo* 'while taking was carrying', or self-affective *koo* 'was carrying along with him' (for his own benefit). In sentence (1) emphatic *ee* serves to block this interpretation. But the ambiguity in such circumstances, if any, is usually trivial.

3.4 Durative or Continuative Action.

Durative or continuous action similar to the 'progressive' construction verb+ing in English, is expressed in Tamil by combining *koo* in its AVP form *kittu* with the 'stative' aspectual verb *iru*, i.e. *kittiru*, and affi xing this to the AVP of a main verb : *vandu + kitt-irundeen* 'I was com-ing.' The expression of durative continuous action (a semantically separate kind of aspectual contrast) will be dealt with in more detail in a later section, but a few examples are given here.

(45) ellaarum peesi-kittiru-ndaanga

all speak-DURATIVE-were

'Everyone was talking.'

(46) raaman saappittu-kittiru-kkaaru

Raman eat-DURATIVE-perf-PNG

'Raman is eating.'

(47) kamalaa vanda poodu, naan padiccu-kittiru-ndeen

Kamala came when, I read-DURATIVE-tense-PNG

'When Kamala arrived, I was reading.'

(48) kurande eeru manikkullee tuung-kittiru-kkum

child 7.00 within sleep-DURATIVE-will-be

'By 7.00 , the child will be sleeping.'

(49) engee pooy-kittiru-kkiinga?

Where go-DURATIVE-pres-PNG

'Where are you going?

3.5 Inchoative and Punctual notions.

We have already introduced the notion that *koo* can serve as a marker of the beginning of a new state or action. This emphasizes the point of beginning, rather than the duration of the state. With stative verbs that require the dative (e.g. *teri* 'know', *puri* 'understand', the addition of *koo* emphasizes the point (hence punctual) of beginning to understand or know. Erstwhile dative-stative verb stems with *koo* affixed become nominative-

subject action verbs. Example of contrast between verbs without *koo* are labelled *a* below, and examples with *koo* are labelled *b* below :

(50) a. adu enakku teriyum

that to-me known

'I know that.'

b. naan ade terinjukitten

I that-acc know-INCHOAT-past-PNG

'I realized (came to know; found out) that'

(51) a. avar solradu ungalukku puriyuma

he says-thing to-you understand-Q

'Do you understand what he says?'

b. avar solradu purinju-kittiingalaa?'

he says-thing understand-INCHOATPAST-PNG-Q

'Did you (finally) understand what he is talking about? (Did the nickle finally drop? Do you get it?)

(52) a. okkaarunga

sit-imp-polite

'Please remain seated.'

b. okkaandukoonga

sit-inchoat-polite

'Please be seated; please sit down' (Please enter the state of being seated)

3.6 Lexical problems.

In modern Tamil, expecially in Spoken, there are lexical verbs that no longer occur without an aspectual verb, i.e. they have been relexicalized with the aspectual verb incorporated, as it were, into the stem. LT verbs such as *kaa* 'wait' now occur almost exclusively with (aspectual *koo* or aspectual *iru* attached, i.e. kaattukoo or *kaattiru*. In such cases, the aspectual value of *koo* is weakened[16] and the compound simply represents the

lexical form of the verb. Thus there can be a sort of 'sliding scale' from lexical to grammatical, with some combinations of main verb and *koo* being primarily lexical, with very little aspectual 'meaning', but at the other end of the scale the occurrence of *koo* will be minimally lexical but maximally aspectual.

This is also the case with the verb *kal* 'learn' which now occurs only with *koo* or *iru* attached: *kattukoonga* '(please) learn (it)'. This contrasts with *kal* with *iru* attached : *kattiru* 'be learning'; the illocutionary force of this combination is be sarcastic or ironic, since tamir enge katti-irukkiinga (which literally means 'Where did you learn Tamil?") has the illocutionary force of 'Where (the hell) did you learn Tamil? (i.e., you don't know Tamil.)' Use of koo with some other verbs, as noted above, also contrasts with non-use in an almost purely lexical way : poodu 'put, drop' means 'put on' clothing, but poottu-koo implies the result of putting on, i.e. 'wearing'.

This summary of some of what is known about Tamil aspect is not meant to be exhaustive; it may never be possible to encapsulate all that can be said about this issue. But we do know the following :

- There seems to be a category of aspect that must be recognized for Tamil that involves a continuum of grammaticalization from none (i.e. pure lexical or syntactic concatenation) to full-fledged category-hood.
- Most dialects (and the Literary Language) recognize a subset of aspectual markers that are clearly aspectual, and have little or no overlap with their lexical analogs. Indeed, the lexical verb can often be followed by the corresponding aspectual verb.
- Most dialects also show a set of aspectual verbs that involve a component of aspect, but also an attitudinal notion of some sort. This set varies more from dialect to dialect, but nevertheless language-wide and even family-wide features are shared. For example, Tamil poodu 'malicious intent' (lexically 'put') has as its analog in Kannada the verb haaku, which has the same aspectual and lexical meanings in Kannada, even though the two verbs are quite different phonologically. This seems to be

a feature of the Indian linguistic area that has been noted for many languages, i.e. the lexical-aspectual-attitudinal polarity will be foundin languages as different as Tamil and Bengali; one even notes some carryover into Indian English.

- Theories of syntax that require categorical rules, or fixed grammaticality cannot capture generalizations about aspect in these languages.

- In the case of clearly-aspectual auxiliaries, we often find that they are phonologically different from their lexical analogs, having undergone certain phonological rules that do not apply to lexical verbs because the conditions for their application are not met there. Phonological rules that operate across morpheme boundaries of concatenated verbs do not have the same application when what is concatenated is a verb and an aspectual verb.

4. Pragmatic Considerations.

Another variable feature of Tamil aspectual verbs is that there are pragmatic considerations that are involved in the choice of whether to mark aspect or not.

Since aspect is not an obligatory category, it may or not be present. However, there is a tendency not to mark aspectual distinctions in certain constructions, even if they might be technically grammatical. The reasons for this are pragmatic ones, having to do with politeness, shared perceptions, the nature of truth propositions, etc. There is also a tendency to use aspectual marking to add speaker commentary to the sentence, even with the 'purely' aspectual markers, but especially with the attitudinal ones.

- Aspect marking is an optional category; unlike tense or some other obligatory categories, is not required. Polarity of going/coming, known and unknown, culturally correct/ incorrect.

- Occurs most often in positive declarative sentences, rarely in negative. But common in both positive and negative imperatives.

- Even in non-attitudinal aspect-marking, can be used expressively to comment, to deprecate, etc. We are

already noted the form *kattiru* 'be learning', whose illocutionary force is sarcastic or ironic, since *tamiẕ enge kattirukkiinga* (which literally means 'Where did you learn Tamil?') has sarcastic illocutionary force : 'Where (the hell) did you learn Tamil? (i.e., you don't know Tamil.)'

Aspect may be bi-polar, paradoxical; meaning 'intentional' in one context and 'accidental' in another. ('Ramaswamy cut his finger/hair')

5 Grammaticalization

I suggest that it is in the growing body of literature on grammaticalization (e.g. Harper and Traugott 1993) that we can begin to put our finger on how the verbal category of aspect can be dealt with. Most analyses of VAM have dealt with aspectual verbs as if they were simply a special kind of verb with special syntactic properties, rather than a morphological marking of an obligatory or optional category. This approach has characterized most previous analyses, including my own.

In a recent study of certain phonological processes that seem to apply only word-internally in Tamil, however, I have had to conclude that in spoken Tamil, verbal aspect marking, once explainable as a syntactic process, has become morphological; since VAM is clearly not inflectional, it seems rather to be derivational. The fact that the evidence for this is phonological is problematical, but it is the very absence of the phonological process in LT that has meant that verbal aspect marking can be handled as a syntactic phenomenon with impunity in LT. And in fact, most recent syntactic studies of VAM (e.g. Steever 1983, Annamalai 1978, Dale 1975) have relied on data from LT, rather than ST. Had these studies used the spoken language for data, they would, I believe, have been forced to draw other conclusions. A lot can happen in seven centuries in the history of a language, and as far as VAM is concerned, the difference seems to be that the process of grammaticalization of this category has progressed since the time LT was last codified, i.e. in the 13th century.

What does the evidence from studies of grammaticalization in general offer this analysis in particular? Let us review some of the characteristics of grammaticalization, the process by which

lexical items become grammatical morphemes in various languages.

1. Happens mainly with verbal items; becoming modal, auxiliary, or aspectual in some way.

2. May be more widespread in the spoken language than in the written. Newly grammaticalized modals in English like 'sposeta' and 'hafta' (derived, of course from *supposed to* and *have to*, respectively, are found with those pronunciations in the spoken language, but tend to be replaced by other items, e.g. *must, should* in literary dialect.

3. Process is gradual, lasting perhaps centuries, and retaining traces of the lexical past of the auxiliary even when fully grammaticalized.

4. Phonologically, newly-grammaticalized material operates differently than the old lexical item: (haefte) instead to *have to,* (sposte) instead of *supposed to, going* to is replaced by (gono) except when 'motion toward' is meant, not futurity:

H

e's gonna go to the store.

*H

e's gonna the store {=He's going to the store.)

5. Grammars of languages in which grammaticalization is ongoing tend to ignore the process and give only the older situation; the existence of newer developments may be noted humorously, but are not taken seriously.

As we can see, the Tamil aspectual system exhibits many of the signs of grammaticalization :

1. The system shows great variability in syntax, morphology, and phonology. No one set of rules (e.g. phonological) can account for all of the kinds of variability.

2. There are more aspectually verbs in modern ST than in LT.

3. Verbs all have lexical analogs, but those that are more grammaticalized exhibit more phonological deviance from the

lexical form.

4. There is dialectal and pragmatic variation.

5. The most grammaticalized of the AM's are quite uniform and have no attitudinal nuances; less fully-grammaticalized AM's retain semantic notions that are commentarial and judgemental, and hence highly variable.

6. What can easily be explained as a syntactic system in LT can now best be explained as a more morphological one in ST.

Notes

1. They have been referred to by various names : aspectual verbs, aspect markers, aspectual auxiliaries, verbal extensions, post-verbs, intensive verbs, etc.

2. Most examples given here are from Spoken Tamil rather than LT, but many are quoted from their LT versions given elsewhere.

3. One can either treat the notion of being `derived' from something else as historical or as a process of derivational morphology. Typically native and missionary grammarians have dealt with aspectualy verbs as if they were special or idiosyncratic usages of lexical verbs, rather than being semantically and synchronically different. Arden, for example, refers to them as intensifying the meaning of the lexical verb. (Arden 1942:282-3)

4. This is a form of the verb that is essentially its past stem minus person-number-gender (PNG) markers ; it expressen in ordinary syntax the notion that that some verbal action preceded another verbal action, that expressed by the next verb in the sentence. A sentence may have only one finite verb; all other verb must be non-finite, such as the adverbial participle, the infinitive, or some other.

5. I have dealt with the nitty-gritty details of the three iru's in my 19?? articles.

6. That is, away from the speaker.

7. The attitudinal aspectual verbs are not a closed set, and different dialects may use different verbs as markers of aspectual and attitudinal nuances. The non-attitudinal aspectual verbs are

a closed set and show less variation from dialect to dialect. But there are some differences between Literary and Spoken Tamil, even in this set. Annamalai 1981 also lists kodu `benefactive'; Ramanujan (196?) lists XXX.

8. Note the phonological differences between (vidu `completive' and vidu `leave, let': the completive AV has a deletable v, while the initial v of the lexical verb in never deleted. The question of whether the completive AV actually requires an initial v in its underlying form (which is then deleted), and the whole question of intervocalic v-deletion is one I have tried to deal with elsewhere. (Schiffman 1993, forthcoming.)

9. Annamalai calls this the verb of anticipated consequence.'

10. This aspectual verb is often erroneously translated as English `used to', e.g. `Many kings used to rule at that time,'wheres `used to' probably ought to be reserved fro translating habitual actions, which vaa does not express.

11. The intransitive tole is usually used with intransitive verbs, and probably originally the transitive was used only with transitive main verbs. But now transitive tole may occur with intransitive main verbs as wellN there is variability according to dialect.

12. The short /o/ in many forms of this morpheme is actually phonetically [e], i.e. koreen is [], etc.

13. The extreme variability of the phonology of this AV bespeaks a radical departure of some sort that are one of the symptoms of the process of grammaticalization.

14. E. Annamalai refers to this verb as `ego-benefactive.' Many of the examples of aspect (which he refers to as verbal extension), are taken from his 1985 book on the subject.

15. Many of the most interesting examples here and elsewhere are taken from Annamalai 1981, but converted from LT to ST.

16. I would prefer a better term than this but if we see aspect as a still-variable category in Tamil, we have to place it on a continuum with two poles, and variation in between.

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தமிழிற் கவிதை பற்றிய இலக்கணமயப்படுத்தப்பட்ட நோக்குகளும் தமிழிலக்கியத்தின் உள்ளார்ந்த படைப்பாற்றல் நெகிழ்வுணர்வும்

- தொல்காப்பியம் முதல் பாட்டியல் நூல்கள் வரை காணபபடும் செய்யுளிலக்கண மரபு பற்றிய சில குறிப்புகள்

கார்த்திகேசு சிவத்தம்பி

யாழ்ப்பாணப் பல்கலைக்கழகம்

தமிழிற் கவிதையியல் (Poetics) பற்றிப் பேசும் நூல்கள், அரிஸ்ரோற்றில் 'கவிதையியல்' பற்றி எழுதியது போன்றோ, அன்றேல் வடமொழி இலக்கிய மரபில் 'ரஸ' 'த்வனி'க் கோட்பாடுகள் இலககியக் கொள்கைகளாக விரித்தெழுதபபட்டது போன்றோ, விவரண விளக்க முறையில அமையாதுள்ள தன்மையை நாம் அவதானிக்கலாம்.

இப்பண்பு காணப்படும் அதேவேளையில், தமிழின் கவிதை வெளிப்பாடுகளைக் கால ஓட்டத்தில், வடமொழிக் கவிதை இலக்கிய மரபின் பின்னணியில் வைத்து நோக்கும் ஒரு பண்பு படிப்படியாக வளர்ந்து வருவதைக் கி.பி. ஏழாம், எட்டாம் நூற்றாண்டின் பினனர்க் காணக் கூடியதாகவுள்ளது.

இந்தச் செல்நெறி தவிர்க்கப்பட முடியாத ஒன்று ஆகும். தமிழின் படைப்பிலக்கியப் பாரம்பரியத்தை வரலாற்று நிலை நின்று நோக்கும்பொழுது அவ்வுண்மை புலப்படுகிறது. வரலாற்றுப் பரப்பினுள் முதன்முதலில் தெரியவரும் பொழுது தமிழ்நாட்டின் சூழல், முற்றிலும் பண்பாட்டுக்கு இயைந்ததொன்றாகக் காணப்படும். இந்தக்கவிதை மரபு, அடுத்துவரும காலப்பகுதிகளில் அதிகரித்து இந்தியமயப்பாடு (வடமொழி ஊடாட்டம்) காரணமாக இந்தியப் பொதுமையினுள் இணைந்து, அநத இந்தியப் பொதுமைக்குத் தன் பங்களிப்பினைச் செய்து, பின்னர் இந்திய மரபுக்கப்பாலானவையான மத, பண்பாட்டுச் செல்வாக்குக்கள் வந்து சேர, உலகப்பொதுவானஓர் இலக்கிய நெறியைத் தழுவிக்கொள்வதைக் காண்கின்றோம். அகம், புறம்முதல் காப்பியம் வரையிலான வளர்ச்சியையும், காப்பியங்கள் முதல் பக்தி இலக்கியங்கள் வரையிலான வரலாற்றையும், சைவ, வைணவ பக்தி இலக்கியங்கள் முதல் இஸ்லாமிய கிறிஸ்தவ இலக்கியங்களின்

தோற்றம் வரையிலான விரிவையும், இவற்றுக்குப் பின்வரும் புனைகதை, புதுக்கவிதை முதலான இலக்கிய வகைகளையும் பார்க்கும் பொழுது இவ்வுண்மை நன்கு புலனாகின்றது. தமிழிற் கவிதையியல் பற்றிய சிந்திப்புக்களிலும் இப்பண்பு காணப்படுவது இயல்பே.

ஆயினும் இவ்வாறு வளர்ந்து விரிந்து செல்லும் தமிழ்க்கவிதைப்பரப்பில், இலக்கியப் படைப்பு 'செய்யுள' (செய் + உள, உள்ளே ஆக்கப்படுவது, நிர்மானிக்கப்படுவது) என்றே சிநதனையிற பதிவு செயயப்பட்டது. 'உண்டாக்கப்படுவது' எனும் இககருத்து கிரேக்க இலக்கியத்துக்கும் பொருந்துவது என்பதனை அறிஞாகள (காமில் ஸ்வெலபில்-1991) சுட்டிக் காட்டியுள்ளனர். இந்தச் "செயகை'யானது பொதுவான இந்திய மரபிற்கமையத் தமிழிலும் விதிமுறையான 'இலக்கணவிதி'களாகவே எடுத்துக் கூறபபடடுளளது. படைப்பு முறைமையினை இலக்கணநிலைப் படுத்தும்பொழுது, குறிப்பிட்ட செய்யுள் மரபு வேறுபாடற்ற, விதி நிலைப்பட்டு நிற்பது போன்ற ஒரு மனப்பதிவு ஏற்படுவது இயல்பு. ஆனால் இந்த விதிமுறைப் பிரிவுககுத் தளமாக அமையும் படைபபுக்களை (செய்யுள்களை) நோக்கும்பொழுது அவற்றில ஒரு இலக்கிய நெகிழ்வு நிலையினை அவதானிக்காமலிருக்க முடியாது. விதிகள் படைப்புக்களின் புத்தாக்கத்திறனை மறைத்து நிற்கினறமையைக் காணலாம்.

தமிழின் செய்யுளிலக்கியத்தின் தோற்றுவிப்பு, உருவாககம் பற்றிய இநத இலககணமயப்பாட்டினையும, அதேவேளை அந்த இலக்கியப் பாரம்பரியத்தினுட் செறிந்து கிடக்கும் படைப்பாக்க நெகிழ்வையும் சுடடிக்காடடுவதே இவ ஆய்வின் நோககமாகும்.

இந்தச் செலநெறியினைச் சில இலக்கிய வரலாற்றுக் கட்டங்களின் பின்புலத்தில் வைத்துக் காண்பித்தல் பொருத்தமாகவிருக்குமெனக் கருதுகின்றேன்.

(I) அக, புறத்திணைகள் பற்றிய இலக்கண இறுக்கமும சங்க இலககியங்களின் படைப்பாகக நெகிழ்வு நிலையும்.

(அக, புறத்திணைத் தொகைநிலை மரபின் தாக்கரீதியான வளர்ச்சியாகச் சிலப்பதிகாரம் அமையும் தன்மை)

(II) பக்தி இலக்கியங்களுக்கான இலக்கிய/கவிதைக் கொள்கை நமது செயயுளிலக்கண நூல்களில் இல்லாதுள்ளமையும்

(III) தண்டியலங்கார வழிநிறகும் பெருங்காப்பிய, காப்பிய மரபும்,

கம்பராமாயணம், பெரியபுராணத்தை உள்ளடக்க முடியாத இந்தப் பெருங்காப்பியக் கொள்கையும்.

(IV) பாட்டியல் நூல்கள் சுட்டும் இலக்கிய ஆக்க உண்மைகளும் அவற்றின் சமூக - அழகியல் முக்கியத்துவமும்

II

தமிழின் மிகப்புராதனமான கவிதையியற் கொள்கை, தமிழின செய்யுட் படைப்புக்களை அகம், புறம் என்ற பொருள் வடடங்களுககுள வைத்துப் பார்க்கும். அகம், புறம் எனபன யாவை என்பது பற்றிய தனனியல்பான ஒரு வரைவிலககணத்தைத் தொல்காப்பியம் தரவில்லையெனினும், ஒனறுகெொனறு 'இணைநிலை'பபட்டது என்ற ஒரு கொள்கையினைப புறத்திணையியல் முதலாவது நூறபாவிலேயே எடுத்துக் கூறிச் (. 'வெட்சிதானே குறிஞ்சியது புறனே' - புறம் I) செல்கின்றது. குறிஞ்சி, முல்லை எனவரும் நிலங்களில் நடைபெறும் ஆண் - பெண் உறவால் அகததிணை ஆககமும், அவவநநிலத்தின் சமூக-ஆட்சிப் பண்புகளாற் புறத்திணைக்குரிய ஆக்கங்களும் நிர்ணயிக்கப்படுகின்றன என்ற கருத்தே மேலோங்கி நிறகின்றது. உரைகாரர்கள இவற்றிற்கு எழுதிய விளக்கங்கள் இவற்றினை வேறுபடுத்திக காட்டுவனவாகவுள்ளன மாணவநிலையில் இவை ஒன்றுக்கொன்று வேறுபட்டவையாகவே வற்புறுததபபட்டு வந்துள்ளன.

சற்று நுண்ணிதாக நோக்கும்பொழுது, அகத்திணைக்கும, புறத்திணைக்குமுள்ள அடிப்படைக் கவிதைக் கொள்கைகளில் வேறுபாடு இருபபதை அவதானித்தல் வேண்டும். தொல்காப்பியர் அகத்திணைப்பாடல்கள் பறறிப் பேசும்பொழுது அந்தப்பாடல்களின் தளமாக அமையும் முதல், கரு உரி எனபன பற்றிப் பேசுகின்றார். இங்கு முதல் 'பிரதானமானது' (Primary) என்ற கருத்திலேயே வழங்குகின்றது. ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட பிரதேசத்தில் (நிலம்) ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட பருவகாலத்தில் அல்லது வேளையில் (பொழுது) ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட இயற்கை, சமூகச் சூழலில் (கரு, வாழபவர்களுக்கு ஆண் - பெண் உறவில் ஒரு பிரதான உணர்ச்சிநிலை மேலோங்கி நிற்கும் (உரி). இந்த உணர்ச்சி நிலை குறிப்பிட்ட சந்தர்ப்பங்களில் (துறை) மேற்கிளம்பும் என்பதே தொல்காப்பிய விளக்கமாகும். இவ்வாறு மேற்கிளமபும் கவிதை வெளிப்பாடானது அவ்வந்நில வாழ்க்கையின மனித அனுபவங்களை, ஒவ்வொரு உணர்வுநிலைப் (emotional situation) படுத்தி, அதாவது சூழமைவுப்படுத்திக் கூறுகின்றது. இநதக் கவிதைக்

கொள்கைநிலை நின்று பார்க்கும் பொழுது, இது, உணர்வு நிலைப்பட்டவரின நோக்கு வழியாக அவரது குறிப்பிட்ட ஒரு உணர்வுநிலையினை எடுத்துக்காட்டுவதாக அமையுமே அன்றி வாழ்க்கை முழுவதையும் படர்க்கை நிலையில் நின்று எடுத்துக் கூறுவதாக அமையாது. வாழ்க்கையை (மனித உறவின்) உணர்வு நிலைககட்டங்களாகவே இக்கவிதை நோக்குக் காணும். அகத்திணை என்பது சூழலால் வாழ்க்கை தீர்மானிக்கப்படும் ஒரு நிலையில் தோனறும் கவிதை வெளிப்பாடு ஆகும்.

புறத்திணை பற்றிப் பேசும்பொழுது முதல், கரு, உரி பற்றிப் பேசப்பெறவில்லை. அதன் தோற்றத்துக்கான களம் பற்றிய திட்டவட்டமான குறிப்பு எதுவும தொல்காப்பியத்தில் இல்லை. ஆனால் புறத்திணைப்பாடல்கள் அகத்திற் பேசப்படும் திணைகள் ஒவ்வொன்றுக்கும் 'புற' மானவை என்று இணைக்கப்படுகின்றன.

வெட்சி - குறிஞசி

வஞ்சி - முல்லை

உழிஞை - மருதம்

தும்பை - நெயதல்

வாகை - பாலை

காஞ்சி - பெருந்திணை

பாடாண் - கைக்கிளை

அகத்திணை மரபில் வற்புறுத்தப்படும் திணை - நில இயைபு (நடுவண் ஐந்திணை நடுவணது ஒழியப்படுதிரைவையம் பாத்திய பண்பே) புறத்தில் வற்புறுத்தப்படவில்லையெனினும் நிலத்தின் பண்பு அதற்குரிய போரின இயலபாக இயைத்துள்ளமையைக் காணலாம். ஆயினும் காஞ்சியும், பாடாணும் எவ்வாறு முறையே கைக்கிளைககும் பெருந்திணைக்கும் 'புற' மாக அமையுமென்பது உரையாசிரியர்களாலேயே விளக்கிக் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது.

அகத்திணை இயலில யார்யார் எவ்வெச்சந்தர்ப்பங்களில் எவ்வெவ்விடயஙகளை (உணர்வுநிலைகளில் நின்று) எடுத்துக் கூறலாமெனக் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளதுபோன்று அல்லாது புறத்திணை இயலில், இந்த இந்தப்போர்நிலைச் சந்தர்ப்பங்கள் பாடப்படுதற்குரியன என்று வற்புறுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது.

இதனடியாகவும் ஒரு சந்தர்ப்பச் சூழமைவுக் கவிதை முறைமையே (situational poetry) வற்புறுத்தப்படுகின்றது. புறத்திணை மரபினைத் தொல்காப்பியம் பதிவுசெய்துள்ள முறைமை, புறப்பொருள் வெண்பாமாலை பதிவு செய்துள்ள முறைமையிலிருந்து வேறுபட்டு நிற்பதென்பது, புறநானூற்றில் வரும் செய்யுட்கள் புறப்பொருள் வெண்பாமாலை வழி வரும் விளக்க முறைமையினையே பெரிதும் ஒட்டி வருகின்றன என்பது அறிஞர்களால் எடுத்துரைககப்பட்டுள்ளது. புறப பொருள் வெண்பாமாலை பாடாண், காஞ்சியைக கைக்கிளை, பெருந்திணையின் புறமாகக் கொள்ளவில்லை. புறநானூற்றில் பாடல்கள் தொகுக்கப்பட்டுள்ள முறைமை தொல்காப்பியத்தையும் விடப் புறப்பொருள்வெண்பாமாலையை ஒட்டி அமைந்துள்ளது என்பது நிறுவப்பட்டுள்ளது (Marr).

கவிதைக் கொள்கை என்ற தளநிலை நின்று நோக்கும்பொழுது, அகத்துக்கும் புறத்துக்குமிடையே பாடுபவர் நிலையில் வேறுபாடு உண்டு. அகம் ஒரு பாத்திரத்தின் கூற்று ஆகவே அமையும் ஆனால் புறத்திற் பாடுபவர் நேரே நின்று பாடுகின்றார். இது ஒரு முக்கியமான வேறுபாடு ஆகும். கவிஞனின் பாடுதிறன் தன்மைநிலையில் முற்றுமுழுதாகத் தொழிற்படுவதற்கு இடம் உள்ளது போன்று அகத்திணையின் கவிஞர் 'நேரடி'யாகத் தொழிற்படவில்லை. பாத்திரத்தின் 'கூற்று' ஆகவே அகத்தில் வரலாம்.

இந்தக் கவிதையியல் உண்மை இன்று நமககுக் கிடைத்துள்ள 'செய்யுள்'களின் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சி நிலையை அறிந்துகொள்ள உதவுகின்றன. சங்க இலககிய அகத்திணைப் பாடல்களைப்பாடிய 'புலவர்கள்' பெயர்களும் (பெரும்பாலும்) அவர்கள் எவவெப்பாத்திர நிலையில் நின்று 'பாடினார்கள்' என்பதும் எமக்கும் தெரியும். இந்த நிலையில் நின்று கொண்டு நாம் இதற்கு முந்திய இரண்டு மூன்று நிலைகளை ஊகித்துக் கொள்ளலாம்.

1. பாத்திரம் தானே தனது மனநிலையைத் தெரிவிததுப்பாடுதல்.

2. பாத்திரம் பாடுவதாகப் பாணர் பாடுதல்

3. பாணர் மரபுவழியைப் புலவர்கள் பின்பற்றிப் பாடல்.

சங்க இலக்கிய அகத்திணைப் பாடல்களை நோக்கும்பொழுது பாடிய புலவர்களின் பெயர்கள் எமக்குத் தெட்டத் தெளிவாகத் தெரிகின்றன. (பாட்டும் தொகையும்) புலவர்கள் சிலர் தங்கள் பாடல்களில் தங்களைப் பாணர்களாகக் கற்பித்து அக்கற்பித

நிலையில் நின்று பாடியுள்ளனர் எனக் கைலாசபதி எடுத்துக் காட்டுவார் (Kailasapathy : 1968). பாணரின் பாடு முறைமைக்கும் புலவரின் பாடு முறைமைக்குமிடையே வேறுபாடு உண்டு. பாணர்கள் பொதுவில் இசையுடனும் பாடலுடனும் (Song) இணைத்து நோககப்பட, புலவர்கள் சொற்றிறனுடன இணைத்துப்பார்க்கப்படும் ஒரு தன்மையும் காணபபடுகினறது. (Sivathamby : 1981:198). இவ்வுண்மையை நோக்கும்பொழுது நமக்குக் கிடைத்துள்ள சங்க இலக்கியச் செய்யுள்கள் பிரக்ஞைபூர்வமான (சொறறிறனுக்கு முக்கியத்துவம் கொடுக்கும) புலமைநிலை ஆக்கஙகளே என்பது தெரியவரும்.

இலக்கியங்கள் எனும் அடிப்படையில் நோக்கும்பொழுது அகம், புறம் எனபன இருவேறு கவிதைக கொள்கைகளின்படியாகப பிறக்கினறவை என்பதை இதுவரைக் கண்டோம். ஆனால் நமமிடையேயுள்ள சங்க இலக்கியங்களை நோக்கும்பொழுது அவை அகம் - புறம எனற இரு கவிதைக் கொளகையையும ஒன்றுடன் ஒனறை இணைத்து நோககும் ஒரு நிலையிலேயே தோன்றியுள்ளன என்பது தெரியவரும். அகத்திணைப்பாடல்களைப் புறத்திணைச் செயதிகளைத் தருவதறகான ஊடகமாகப புலவர்கள் பயனபடுத்தியுள்ளனர் (அகநானூறு 15, 55, 57, 65, 78, 83, 105, 122, 142, 143, 145, 208, 209, 211, 216, 217, 353, 356, 359). அகநானூறு 288 அரசபுரவலாகள் பற்றிக குறிபபிடுவதாகக் கைலாசபதி குறிப்பிடுவார் (1968 : 9)

பத்துப்பாட்டு நூலகளுள் பட்டினப்பாலை கரிகாலன் புகழைப்பாடுவதற்கு ஒரு கறபித அகததிணைச் சூழலை ஏற்படுத்திக் கொள்கிறது நெடுநல்வாடை போரின் தாக்கத்தால் ஏற்படும் குடும்பநிலைப் பிரிவுகளை எடுத்துப் பேசுகின்றது. புறநானூறு வீரத்தின் சிறப்பை மாத்திரமல்லாது போரினது கொடூரங்களையும், வைதவ்வியம் நிர்பபந்திக்கும் இன்னல்களையும் எடுத்துப் பேசுகின்றது (குறிபபாக 200-வது பாடலுககு மேல).

இக்கட்டததில் தொல்காபபியம் தமிழ்க்கவிதை மரபினை எவவாறு நோக்குகின்றது என்பதனைக் குறித்துக் கொள்ளுதல் பொருத்தமுடையதாகும்.

தொல்காப்பியம் பொருளதிகாரத்தில் முதலில், மற்றைய இந்தியமொழி (குறிபபாக வடமொழி) இலக்கியங்களினோடு ஒப்புநோக்கும் பொழுது காணப்படும் சிறப்புக் கவிதைப் பண்பினையும், அந்தவகைபாடு சார்ந்தனவற்றையும் குறிபபிடுகின்றது. (அகத்திணையியல, புறத்திணையியல், களவியல்,

கற்பியல், பொருளியல்) இவற்றுள் களவியல் முதல் பொருளியல் வரையுள்ளவை சகலவற்றையும் தொல்காப்பியக் கூற்றுகளாகக் கொள்ளக்கூடாது எனப் பல அறிஞர்கள் கூறுவர் (Marr). இந்த வகைபாடுகளையும் அவற்றுக்கான கவிதையியல விவரணங்களையும் தந்தபின்னர், இப்பாடல்களுக்கு (குறிப்பாக அகப்பாடல்களுக்கு) அடித்தளமாக அமையும் உணர்ச்சிக்குத் தளம் (மெய்ப்பாடு) பற்றி எடுத்துக் கூறுகின்றார். பாடல்களின் 'பாவ' தளத்தைப் பார்க்கும் இப்பண்பு 'ரஸ'க் கொள்கையினடியாக வருவதாகும். அதனைத் தொடர்ந்து இலக்கியங்களில் இம்மெய்ப்பாட்டு வெளிப்பாட்டுக்கான பிரதான இலகைிய உத்தியான 'உவமம்' பற்றிப் பேசுகின்றார். அதனைத் தொடர்ந்து செய்யுளின் அமைப்பு பற்றி நீண்ட விளக்கம் தருகிறார். தமிழ் யாப்பின் அமைப்பு பற்றிய விளக்கங்கள் மிக விரிவாகத் தரப்படுகின்றன. இவற்றைத் தொடர்ந்து தமிழின் சொற்பயன்பாட்டு மரபு பற்றி எடுத்துக் கூறுகிறார்.

இந்த அமைப்பினை நோக்கும்பொழுது தொல்காப்பியம், தமிழ் இலக்கியப் பாரம்பரியத்தினை அதனுடன் அதிகப் பரிச்சயம் அற்றவர்களுக்கு அறிமுகம் செய்யும் ஒரு நோக்கினைக் கொண்டுள்ளதென்பது தெரியவருகின்றது. அவ்வாறு அறிமுகம் செய்யும்பொழுது, ஏற்கனவே அவருக்குப் பரிச்சயமான வடமொழி இலக்கண, இலக்கிய மரபுகளைத் தமது கட்டமைப்பாகக் கொண்டிருந்தது எனபதும் புலனாகின்றது. இப்பண்பு சொல்லதிகாரத்தில் காணப்படுகின்றது. பொருளதிகாரத்திலும் காணப்படுகின்றது. இதனால் களவு என்னும் நிலையைக் கந்தர்வத்துடன் இணைத்து (களவியல் 1) நோக்கும ஒரு பண்பு காணப்படுகின்றது. அகத்திணைச் செய்யுளாக்க மரபில் வரும் 'உள்ளுறை'யைத் தொல்காப்பியம் 'உவமை' (வடமொழிக்கருதுகோள்-உபமா) யாகவே காணுகிறது. இது பின்னர் உவமவியலிற் செய்யுளின் உவமைமுறைமை பற்றிப் பேசும் பொழுது பல கருத்துமயக்கங்களுக்கு இடமளிக்கின்றது.

தொல்காப்பியம் செய்யுட்களை அடிவரைவு உள்ளவை, அடிவரைவு அற்றவை எனவகுத்து நோக்குவது கூர்ந்துகவனிக்கப்பட வேண்டியது.

செய்யுள் உறுப்புக்களைப் பற்றிப் பேசிய பின்னர், 'யாப்பு' (ஆக்குதல்) என்பது யாது என்பதை எடுத்துக் கூறி, ('எழுத்துமுதலா ஈண்டிய அடியின் குறித்த பொருளை முடியநாட்டல் யாப்பு என மொழிப' - யாப்பு அறி புலவர் (செய்-74)

அவற்றின் வகைகளை பாட்டு, உரை, நூல், வாய்மொழி, பிசி, அங்கரம், முதுசொல் எனத் தருகின்றது.

அதனைத் தொடர்ந்து அடிவரைவுடையன எனச் சிலவற்றைக் குறிப்பிட்டுவிட்டு (ஆசிரியப்பாட்டு, வெண்பாப்பாட்டு, அங்கதப்பாட்டு, கலிவெண்பாட்டு, பரிபாடல், அடிவரை இல்லன, என

நூல, உரை, பிசி, முதுமொழி, மந்திரம், குறிப்பு, பண்ணத்தி என்பனவற்றைக் குறிபபிடுகின்றார்.

சஙக இலக்கியங்கள என இன்று நம்மிடையே உள்ள இலக்கியங்கள் அகம், புறம் சார்ந்தனவாக இருக்கின்றனவேயன்றி, நூல், உரை, பணணத்தி போன்றனவற்றினைச் சாராதனவாக வேயுள்ளன.

தொல்காபபியம் கூறும் இலக்கிய மரபு இன்று எமக்குக் கிட்டியுள்ள தொகுததோன், தொகுபபித்தோன் முறைமை காரணமாகக் கிடைக்காமற் போயிருக்கலாம. இதனூடே இனனுமொரு வினாவும் உண்டு. கிடைத்துள்ள இலக்கியங்கள் சுட்டும் இலக்கியப் பண்பாட்டினில் (Literary culture) நூல், உரை, மந்திரம் போன்ற படைபபுக்களுக்கு இடம இருந்திருக்க முடியுமா என்பதே அவ்வினாவாகும். அவ்வாறாயின் தொலகாப்பியம் கூறும் நூல், உரை ஆகியன எநத இலக்கியப்பண்பாட்டுக்கு உரியவை, அவை தமிழில எவ்வாறு வந்து இணைந்தன, முக்கியமாக அவை ஏன் பேணப்படவில்லை என்பன மிகமுக்கியமான வினாக்களாகும்.

இது ஒரு புறமிருக்க, இன்னொரு புறத்தில், உள்ள பாடலகளுககுக் கொடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ள உரை விளக்கங்கள் அவற்றின் உண்மையான தன்மையை மறைப்பவனாக உளளமையை இங்குக் குறிப்பிடல் வேண்டும். பரிபாடலில் வரும் பாடல்கூறிற்கான உரைவிளக்கஙகள் இவ்வுண்மையை விளக்குகின்றன. பரிபாடலில் வையை பற்றி வரும் பாடல்கள் (6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 16, 20, 22) காம நுகர்வு சம்பந்தப்பட்டவை என உரை விளக்கங்களிற் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளன. ஆனால் வையைபற்றிய பாடல்கள் யாவற்றிலும் (20-வது ஒரு குறைச் செய்யுளாகும்). இறுதியில் வையை விளிததுப்பாடுவனவாகிய பகுதிகள உள்ளன. வையை பற்றிய பாடல்களில் வரும நீராடலானது வெறுமனே இன்பத்திளைப்பாக இல்லாது, சடங்காசாரமாக நிகழத்தப் பெற்றவை என்பது தெரியவரும. இவ்வாறுநோக்கும் பொழுது, அப்பாடல்கள் வையையை விளித்துப பாடுவனவாக அமையக்கூடிய சாத்தியப் பாடுகளை உடையதாய் இருத்தலை மறந்துவிடுதல் கூடாது. நிலவளம், நீர்வளம், பெருக வேண்டுமென்பதற்காகவும், கருவளச் சடஙகு எனற வகையிலும் நீராடல் இடம் பெற்றிருக்க

வேண்டுமென்பது புலனாகின்றது. பரங்குன்றிலும் இத்தகைய ஒரு வழிபாட்டு மரபு நிலவிற்று என்பதற்கு எட்டாவது பாடல் சான்றாகும். வையை பற்றிய பாடல்களும் வழிபாடு சம்பந்தப்பட்டனவாயின், பரிபாடலில் நமக்குக் கிடைத்துள்ள பாடல்கள் யாவும் மதவழிபாடு பற்றியனவாக அமையும். அவ்வாறு அமைகின்ற பொழுது தமிழில் பக்தி இலக்கியத்துக்கான தொடக்கம் பரிபாடலிற் காணப்படுகின்றது எனும் வாதம் வலுவடைவதை அவதானிக்கலாம்.

இவ்வாறு நோக்கும் பொழுது, தமிழின் கவிதையியல் வளர்ச்சி பற்றிய ஆய்வொன்று, தொல்காப்பிய இலக்கியக் கொள்கைகளையும், அவை சங்க இலக்கியங்களுடன் இணையுமாற்றையும் நுண்ணிதாக நோக்குவதாக அமையவேண்டுவதற்கான புலமைத்தேவை புலனாகின்றது.

அகத்திணைச் செய்யுள் மரபுக்கும் புறத்திணை மரபுக்குமுள்ள உறவுகள் மேலும் ஆராயபபடல் வேண்டும்.

அப்படி ஆராய்கின்றபொழுது சங்க இலக்கியத்தில் வரும் தொகை நிலை மரபிலிருந்து சிலப்பதிகாரத்திற் காணப்படும் தொடர்நிலச் செய்யுள் மரபுக்கான வளர்ச்சியும் தெள்ளிதிற் புலப்படும்.

சஙக இலக்கியங்கள் சூழமைவுப் பாடல்களாக அமைகின்றமை எடுத்துக் கூறப்பட்டது. அதாவது ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட சந்தர்ப்பத்தில் ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட பாத்திரத்தின் மனநிலை எடுத்துக் கூறப்படுகின்றது அல்லது ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட போர் நிகழ்ச்சியினடிப்படையில் ஒருவன் புகழ் பாடப்படுகிறது. இது பின்னர் சந்தர்ப்பம் சுட்டாத தனிப்புகழ்ச்சி முறையாக மாறிற்றெனினும், அகத்திணை மரபில் சூழமைவு போற்றப்பட்டே வந்துள்ளது. அந்த நிலையில் அது வரையறுக்கப்பட்ட உணர்ச்சித் தளத்தைக் கொண்டதாகவே அமைகின்றது.

இதன் அடுத்த, தர்க்கரீதியான வளர்ச்சிக்கட்டம், ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட சம்பவத்தை அல்லது சந்தர்ப்பத்தை மையமாகக் கொண்டு முழு வாழ்க்கையையும் பார்ப்பதாகும். சிலப்பதிகாரம் இதனையே சொல்கின்றது. அதாவது அந்த வாழ்க்கையில், அல்லது சம்பந்தப்பட்டவர்களின் வாழ்க்கைகளில் 'சிலம்பு' என்னும் பொருள் (ஆபரணம்) அதிகாரப்பட்டு நிற்கிறது. அதை மையமாகக் கொண்டு அவர்களின் வாழ்க்கை முழுவதையும் எடுத்துக் கூறும் ஒரு பண்பு சிலப்பதிகாரத்தில் காணப்படுகிறது. ஒரு பின்னணி,

ஒரு சந்தர்ப்பம், ஒரு மனித உறவு அனுபவ வெளிப்பாடு என்ற நிலையிலிருந்து ஒரு பின்னணி, ஒரு சந்தர்ப்பம் (விடயம்) என்ற மையநிலையிலிருந்து முழு மனித உறவு அனுபவங்களையும் வெளிப்படுத்துகின்ற ஓர் இலக்கியவடிவம் மேற்கிளம்புகின்றது.

இதனாலேதான் இளங்கோ தமிழின் முதலாவது மகாகவி (பெருங்கவிஞன்) ஆகிறார். தனக்குமுன்வந்த கவிதைப்பாரம்பரியத் தளத்தில் நின்று கொண்டு ஒரு புதிய வளர்ச்சிக்கு நம்மை இட்டுச செல்கின்றார். **அதுவரை ஒரு நிலை பற்றிப் பேசிய பாடல்கள் (அவை தொகை நிலையாகவும் இருந்தன). இளங்கோவின் கையில் தொடர்நிலையாக மாறுகின்றன.** தமிழ்க்கவிதை வளர்ச்சியில் இது ஒரு பிரதானமான வளர்ச்சிக்கட்டமாகும்

இந்தக கருத்து தமிழின் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சிகள் பற்றிய ஒரு முக்கிய வினாவினை எழுப்புகிறது. அதாவது ஏற்கனவே கதைப்பாடல்கள் இல்லையா என்பது; கதைப்பாடல்கள் இருந்திருக்கலாம். சிலப்பதிகாரத்தின் பாடல் தலைப்புக்களே 'காதை' (Gatha) மரபிருந்ததை எடுத்துக் காட்டுகின்றது. காதை காதையாகக கதையைச் சொல்கின்ற முறைமை, தமிழில் சிலப்பதிகாரத்துடன் ஒரு முக்கிய இலககிய வழககாகின்றது. சிலப்பதிகாரம் தமிழ்க்கவிதை வளர்ச்சியில் ஒரு முக்கிய மைல் கலலாகின்றது. தொடர்நிலைச்செய்யுள் என்ற விவரணம் இந்த உண்மையை எடுத்துக் காட்டுகின்றது. ஆனால் இந்த வளர்ச்சி பிற இலககிய பண்பாட்டு ஊடாடடங்களினால் நேரிதாக அமையாது சிககற்படுத்தபபடுகின்றது. தொடர்நிலைச் செய்யுள் மரபு காப்பியமரபினோடு கலக்கின்றது.

அந்த வரலாற்றையும் அது கிளப்பும் சிக்கல்களையும் பார்ப்பதற்கு முன்னர் பக்தி இலக்கியத் தோற்றம் தமிழ்க் கவிதையியலில் ஏற்படுத்தும் மாற்றத்தினை நோககுவோம்.

III

தமிழின பக்தி இலக்கியம் தமிழ் இந்தியப்பண்பாட்டுக்கு வழஙகியுள்ள அரும பெரும் நிதியாகும். சைவ, வைணவ வழிபாடுகளுடன தொடர்புபட்டு நிறகும இப்பாடல்கள் (தேவார திருவாசகம், திருபபாசுரங்கள்), கடவுளுடன் மனிதன் ஏற்படுத்த முனையும ஆள்நிலைப்பட்ட மனித உறவுத் (personalized human relationship) தொடர்பினடியாகத் தோற்றுவனவாகும். சமூகத்தில் நிலவும் மனித உறவுகளின் அடிப்படையில் கடவுளுடன் உறவு வைத்துக் கொள்ளும் தன்மை அங்குக் காணப்படுகின்றது.

(ஆண்டான் அடிமை, கணவன் மனைவி, தகப்பன் மகன், நண்பர்கள், தாய்-பிள்ளை, காதலன் - காதலி). இன்றுள்ள நிலையில், சைவம், வைணவம் ஆகிய மதங்களின் வளர்ச்சி முறைமை காரணமாக, இப்பாடல்கள் (பிற்காலத்தில்) தொகுக்கப பெற்றுள்ளமையைக் காண்கின்றோம். சைவத்திற் காணபபடாத ஓர் உரை விளக்கப் பாரம்பரியம் வைணவத்தினுள் தொழிற்பட்டு வந்துள்ளது. எவ்வாறாயினும் பின்னர் செய்யப்பட்ட தொகுப்புக்கள் காரணமாக, இவை தொகுதிகளாக (திருமுறைகள், திவ்யப்பிரபந்தமாக) இன்று நமக்குக் கிட்டியுள்ளன நாமும் அவறறைப் பக்தி இலக்கியஙகள் என்றே கூறுகின்றோம். ஆனால் இது சம்பந்தமாக முக்கியமான ஒரு வினா உள்ளது. இவை தோன்றிய சம காலத்தில் இலக்கியஙகளாக இவை ஏற்றுக் கொள்ளப்பட்டனவா என்பதாகும். இன்று நாம் தமிழ் இலக்கிய வரலாற்றில் இவற்றை ஏற்றுப் பக்தி இலக்கியக்காலம் என்று கூறுவது போனற ஓர் இலக்கியப் பிரக்ஞை, இவை பற்றி இவை தோன்றிய காலத்திற் காணப்பட்டதா? அக்கால இலக்கியங்களிலோ அன்றேல் பின்னரோ இவை இலக்கியங்களாகக் கொள்ளப்பட்டு உள்ளனவா? உரையாசிரியர்கள் தேவாரங்களை இலக்கிய உதாரணங்களாகக் காட்டவில்லை என்பது இலக்கிய வரலாற்றுண்மையாகும். ஆழ்வார்கள் பாசுரங்களுக்கான உரைகள் மதநிலைநின்று எழுதப்பட்ட விளக்கங்களே. அவற்றை இலக்கிய முயற்சியாகக் கொள்ளுதல் மரபனறு.

இவ்வாறு நோக்கும் பொழுது பக்தி தேவார திருவாசகம், பாசுரங்கள் அவை தோன்றிய காலத்தில் இலக்கியப்பாரம் பரியத்தின் இணைபிரியா அங்கமாக எடுத்து பேசப்பட்டனவா என்பது ஒரு முக்கிய வினாவாகின்றது.

இவற்றுக்கான ஓர் இலக்கியக் கொள்கை தமிழில் உருவாக்கப்பட்டுள்ளதா என்பதே முக்கியமான வினாவாகும். தொகைநிலை, தொடர்நிலை முறைமை போன்றோ, அகபபொருளைக் கோவைப்படுத்தும் முறைமைபோன்றோ, பக்தி இலக்கியத்தின் அடிப்படைகளைக் கவிதையியற் கொள்கையாக வகுக்கு ஒரு இலக்கிய இலக்கணப் போக்குக் காணப்படவில்லை என்றே கூறல் வேண்டும்.

இலக்கிய வரலாற்று நிலை நின்று கி.பி. ஏழாம் நூற்றாண்டு முதல் ஒன்பதாம் நூற்றாண்டு வரை நடந்த பிரக்ஞைபூர்வமான இலக்கிய முயற்சிகளை நோக்கும் பொழுது, புறத்திணைத் தேவைகட்காக அகத்திணைக்கிளைகளைக் கோவைப்படுத்திப்

பார்க்கும் ஒரு செல்நெறிவளர்வதைக் காணலாம். முத்தொள்ளாயிரம், பாண்டிக் கோவை, நந்திக்கலமபகம் இபபண்புகளைக் காட்டுவனவே. இவை ஒரு புறமாக மறுபுறத்தில் தொடர்நிலைச் செய்யுள் மரபு சமண, பௌத்தர்களால் கையேற்கப்பெற்று பகதி இலக்கியங்கள் தனியே நிற்கின்றன. தாண்டகம் போன்ற ஒரு யாப்பு வடிவத்துக்கான இலக்கண விளக்கம் பன்னிரு பாட்டியலிலே தரப்படுகின்றதெனினும், பக்தி இலக்கியத்தின் இலக்கிய அடிப்படையையோ, வெளிப்பாட்டு முறைமையையோ விளக்கும் சமகால இலக்கணச் சிந்தனைகள் எதுவும் இலக்கிய வரலாற்றிலே தெரியவில்லை எனலாம்.

தமிழக்கவிதையியற் சிந்திப்பு எந்த அளவுக்குத் தனது கவிதைப் பாரம்பரியததிற் காலூன்றி நின்றதென்பதறகு இது போதுமான தடயமாகும்.

அற இலக்கியங்கள் பற்றியும் இத்தகைய ஒரு நிலையே காணப்படுகின்றதெனினும (அதாவது அவற்றின் உருவ-பொருள்மொழி பற்றிய இலக்கண/இலக்கிய விளக்கங்கள் இல்லாமை) தொல்காப்பியத்தினுள் பேசப்பெறும் முதுமொழி போனற குறிப்புக்கள் வழியாகத் தமிழில் மூதுரை (gnomic literature) இலக்கியததுக்கு ஒரு வழிமுறையைக் காணலாம். ஆனால் பக்தி இலக்கியத்தை விளக்குவதற்கு, 'காமப்பகுதி கடவுனும் வரையார் ஏனோர் பாங்கினும் என்மனார் புலவர்' எனும் புறத்திணை (23) நூற்பா போதாதென்றே கொள்ளல் வேண்டும்.

இதன் காரணமாகப் பக்தி இலக்கியத்தின் தோற்றம் பற்றி அண்மைக்கால ஆய்வுகள் சிரத்தை செலுத்துவதை ஏ.கே. ராமானுஜன், நோமன்கட்லர் போன்றோரது எழுத்துக்களில் காணலாம். பெரும்பாலான மேனாட்டறிஞர்கள் தெய்வத்தைப் பராவும் பண்பைப்புறத்திணையிலிருநது வளர்ந்ததாகக் கொள்ள, தமிழ் நாட்டுச சிந்தனைமரபோ அதனை அகத்திணை மரபு வழிப்படுதததி நோக்கும் தன்மையை உடைத்தாயுள்ளது. சைவமரபில் பக்தி மரபும், வரன்முறையான இலக்கிய மரபும் மாணிக்கவாசகரின் திருக்கோவையாரலே இணைகின்றமையைக் காணலாம்.

பரிபாடலைப் பக்தி இலக்கிய மரபின் தொடக்கமாகக் கொள்ளும் ஒரு மரபு இனறு வளர்ந்துள்ளது (Kamil Zvelabil). பரிபாடலில் வரும் தெய்வம் பரவுமுறைமைக்கும் தேவார திருவாசக திருபபாசுர மரபில் வரும் தெயவம் பரவு முறைமைக்கும் ஓர் அடிப்படையான வேறுபாடுள்ளது பரிபாடலில் வழிபாடு கூட்டு வழிபாடாகவே தெரிகின்றது. காரைக்காலம்மையார்,

முதலாழ்வார்கள் முதல் வரும் பக்தி வெளிப்பாட்டு மரபில் இறைவனுடன் ஒரு தனிநிலைப்பட்ட, ஆள்நிலைப்பட்ட (individualized, personalised relationship) உறவு இருப்பதனை அவதானித்தல் வேண்டும்.

இங்கு முனைப்புறுத்தப்பட வேண்டியது யாதெனில், தமிழ்க்கவிதையியற் சிந்திப்புக்களிற் பக்தி இலக்கியத்தைத் தனியாக ஓர் இலக்கிய வெளிப்பாட்டு முறையாக நோக்கும் பண்பு பொருளிலக்கண மரபிற் காணப்பெறவில்லை என்பதாகும்.

பக்தி வெளிப்பாட்டில் முக்கியத்துவம் பற்றிய இச்சிரத்தையின்மை தமிழ்நாட்டின் 'காப்பிய வளர்ச்சி' பற்றிய நோக்கில் சில சிக்கல்களை ஏற்படுத்துகின்றது.

IV

தமிழிற் 'காப்பிய' வளர்ச்சி பற்றிய இலக்கிய வரலாற்றுண்மைகளும், இலக்கண விளக்கங்களும் சுவையான பல விடயங்களை வெளிக்கொணருகின்றன.

பொருட்டொடர்நிலைச் செய்யுட்களான காப்பியங்கள் பற்றிய தமிழிலக்கணம் தண்டியலங்காரத்திலேயே (கி.பி 12-ம் நூற்றாண்டு) பேசப்பெறுகின்றது. ஆனால் அதற்கு முன்னரே வடமொழிக் காப்பிய மரபையொட்டித் தமிழிற் காப்பியங்கள் என்று கொள்ளப்படும் நூல்கள் எழுந்துவிட்டன. பெருங்கதை, சீவகசிந்தாமணி ஆகிய நூல்கள் தண்டியலங்காரம் தோன்றுவதற்கு முன்னரே தோன்றிவிட்டன.

தமிழில் பெருங்காப்பியம், சிறுகாப்பியம் என்று தொகுத்து நோக்குகின்ற ஒரு மரபு உண்டு. பெருங்காப்பியத்தினுள் வரமுடியாதவையான சிலப்பதிகாரம், மணிமேகலை பெருங்காப்பியங்களாக எடுத்துப் பேசப்பட்டுள்ளன.

பெருங்காப்பிய, சிறுகாப்பிய மரபில் எடுத்துப் பேசப்பெறும் நூல்கள் சமண, பௌத்த மதங்களைச் சார்ந்தவை. சிலப்பதிகாரம் தவிர்ந்த மற்றைய கதைகள் பௌத்த, சமணக் கதைப்பாரம்பரியங்களினடியாக வருபவை (மணிமேகலை பௌத்த மதவழக்காற்றினைத் தளமாகக் கொண்டது).

தண்டியலங்காரம், வடமொழி நூலாகிய காவ்யாதர்சத்தைப்

பெரும்பாலும் அடியொற்றியே எழுதப்பட்டதென்பர். தமிழ் நிலைப்பட்ட தொகைநிலை, தொடர்நிலை முறைமைகளை அது விளங்கிக் கொண்டதெனினும், அதன் கட்டமைப்பு வடமொழி மரபு வழிப்பட்டதே என்பது அது கூறும் செய்யுள்நெறி, அணி வகைகள் என்பனவற்றால் நன்கு தெரியவரும். தண்டியலங்காரம் காப்பியங்களைப் பெருங்காப்பியம், காபபியம என இருவகையினவாகப் பிரிக்கும். சீவக சிநதாமணி பெருங்காப்பிய இலக்கண அமைதிகடகேற்ப எழுதப்பெற்ற பெருங்காப்பியம் எனபது எல்லோருக்கும் ஒப்பமுடிந்த உண்மை.

தமிழிற் பேரிலக்கியங்கள் பற்றிய இலக்கண வகுப்பு முறைமை பறறிப் பேசும்பொழுது வடமொழி இலக்கிய மரபில் பேசப்பெறும், புராண, இதிகாச மரபு தமிழிற போற்றப்படுவதில்லை என்ற உண்மையையும் பதிவு செய்து கொளளல் அவசியம்

தமிழிற் காப்பியங்கள் பற்றிய இலக்கண அமைதிகளைக கூறும் நூலகளின் அடிபபடையில், தமிழின் மிகச்சிறந்த பேரிலக்கியங்களான கம்பராமாயணம், பெரிய புராணம் ஆகிய இரண்டினது இலக்கிய வகைப்பாட்டுத் தன்மை பற்றிய தெளிவின்மை காணப்படுகின்றது. தண்டியலங்காரத்து விதிகளின் அடிபபடையில் கம்பராமாயணம், பெரியபுராணம் ஆகியவற்றைப் பெருங்காப்பியங்கள் என்று கொள்ளலாமா?

இக்கட்டத்தில், கமபராமாயணமும் பெரியபுராணமும் 'உருவாக்கப்பட்ட' முறைமை பற்றிய ஒரு குறிப்பினைத் தெளிவுபடுத்துதல் அவசியம். கம்பராமாயணம், இந்தியப பொது இதிகாச மரபில் வருவது. ஆனால் கம்பன் இராமாயணத்தை 'எடுத்துககூறியுளள' (Narrate) முறைமையானது இராமாயணத்தைத் தமிழ் இலக்கிய முறைமை வழியாகச் சொல்வது ஆகும். தமிழின் இலக்கிய மரபுக்கியையச் சொல்வதுடன் மாத்திரம் நின்று விடாது, தமிழ்நாடு வளர்த்தெடுத்த பக்தி இலக்கியப் பாரம்பரியத்தினுள்ளும் அது நிலைகொண்டு நிற்பதாகும்.

கம்பனின் கவிதையியல் இவ்விடயததில் நன்கு தெளிவுபடுத்தப்படல் வேண்டும். இந்துமதப் பாரம்பரியத்தின் செவிவழிக்கதை, அலங்காரங்கள் முக்கிய இடம்பெறும் ஒரு 'காவியநடை', (இந்நடையில் காவிய மிகைப்பாடு epic conceit) ஓர் இயல்பான பண்பு ஆகும். அவற்றைத் தமிழ் நாட்டின் இலக்கியப் பண்பாட்டுக்குள் நிலை நிறுத்திக்கூறும் திறன் (அக, புறத்திணைமரபு, பக்தி இலக்கிய முறைமை) ஆகியன கம்பராமாயணத்துக்குத் தனித்துவமான ஒரு கவிதையியற் பண்பினை அளிக்கின்றன.

இந்தியப் பொதுமையையும் தமிழின் தனித்துவங்களையும் இணைத்து, ஒன்றின் பின்புலத்தில் மற்றதைச் சித்தரிக்கும் திறன் கம்பனிடத்து இருந்தது. தமிழின் எந்தச் செய்யுளிலக்கண நூலாவது கம்பராமாயணத்தைத் தமிழ்க்கவிதையியல் வளர்ச்சிக்குள் வைத்துக்காட்டும் முயற்சியில் இறங்கவே இல்லை. இனங்கண்டு கொள்ளவில்லை.

இந்நிலையே பெரிய புராணத்தையும் பாதிக்கின்றது. வடமொழிப்புராண இலக்கணங்களுக்குக் கூறப்படும் விதிகளை ஏற்கமுடியாததாகவும், பெருங்காப்பிய இலக்கண மரபுக்குள் வராததாகவும்அமைகின்ற பெரியபுராணம், தமிழிலக்கியப் பண்பாட்டின் தனித்துவமான இரண்டாவது உதாரணமாகும்.

காப்பிய மரபைத் தமிழ்மயப்படுத்திய கம்பனும், சேக்கிழாரும் தமிழ்க் கவிதையியலிற் பெறும் இடததினை விவரிக்கும் இலக்கிய நோக்கினை, தமிழின் இலக்கண மயப்படுத்தப்பட்ட கவிதையியல் விளககத்தினாலே தர முடியவில்லை என்பது நன்கு புலனாகின்றது. இவ்வாறு நோக்கும்பொழுதுதான் நமது கவிதையியற் சிந்தனைப பாரம்பரியத்தின் போதாமை உன்னிப்பாகத தெரிகிறது. அததுடன் செய்யுளிலக்கண நூல்களின் இயந்திரத்தன்மையும் புலப்படுகின்றது.

V

கி.பி. பன்னிரண்டாம் நூற்றாண்டு முதல் தமிழில் பாட்டியல் நூல்கள் தோன்றத் தொடங்குகினறன என்பது இலக்கிய வரலாற்றாசிரியர்கள் முடிபு ஆகும்.

பன்னிரு பாட்டியல்	(12ம் நூற்றாண்டு)
வெண்பாப்பாட்டியல்	(12ம் நூற்றாண்டு)
நவநீதப்பாட்டியல்	(14ம் நூற்றாண்டு)
சிதம்பரப்பாட்டியல்	(16ம் நூற்றாண்டு)
பிரபந்த மரபியல்	(16ம் நூற்றாண்டு)
இலக்கண விளக்கம்	(17ம் நூற்றாண்டு)

ஆகியன பெரிதும் எடுத்துச்பேசப் பெறும் பாட்டியல் இலக்கண நூல்களாகும்.

பன்னிருபாட்டியலையும் வெண்பாப்பாட்டியலையும்

ஆதாரமாகக் கொண்டு நோக்கும்பொழுது, பாட்டியல் நூல்கள் கூறும் கவிதையாக்கப் பண்பு, பன்னிரண்டாம் நூற்றாண்டில், சோதிடம் முதலாம் நம்பிக்கைகளுடன் இணைந்து விட்டதென்பதையும், இந்தியச் சாதி முறையான சமூக அதிகார அடுக்குமுறை இலக்கிய ஆக்கத்தில் மிக முக்கியமான இடத்தைப் பிடித்துவிட்டதென்பதையும் தெட்டத்தெளிவாகப் புலப்படுத்துகின்றது.

பாட்டினை இவர்கள் முதலில், எழுத்துக்களின் தொகுதிகளாகவே பார்க்கின்றனர். அந்த எழுத்துக்கள் வருணத்தினடிப்படையிற் பிரிக்கப்படலாம் என்றும், அவை வானவர், மக்கள், நரகர், விலங்குகள் எனக் கதி நிலைப்பட நோக்கப்படலாம் என்றும், எழுத்துக்களில் அமுத எழுத்துக்கள், நஞ்செழுத்துக்கள் உண்டென்றும் எழுத்துக்கள் ஆண்பால், பெண்பால் எழுத்துக்கள் எனப் பிரிக்கப்படலாமென்றும், குழந்தைநிலை, குமாரநிலை,அரசுநிலை, மூப்புநிலை, மரணம் ஆகிய ஒவ்வொரு நிலையைச் சுட்டும் எழுத்துக்கள் உண்டென்றும் ஒவ்வொரு நட்சத்திரத்துக்கும் சிற்சில எழுத்துக்கள் உள்ளனவென்றும் விரிவாகக் கூறிச்செல்லும். இவ்வாறு வகுக்கும் பொழுது நூலுக்குநூல் சிற்சில வேறுபாடுகள் உள எனினும் அவற்றினூடே சொற்களின் பயன்பாடு பற்றிய இயற்கையத்தீத நம்பிக்கையொன்று நிலவிற்று என்னும் கருத்து நிலையூன்றி நிற்பதைக் காணலாம்.

பன்னிரு பாட்டியலில் எழுத்தியலைத் தொடர்ந்து சொல்லியலில் பாடலின் முதற்சீரின் கண் அமையும் சொல்லினது பொருத்தம் கூறப்படுகிறது. மங்கலச் சொல் என்ற கோட்பாடு அங்குத் தொழிற்படுவதைக் காணலாம்.

உதாரணமாக, கலம்பகம் பற்றிக் குறிப்பிடும் பொழுது

தேவர்	- 100 பாடல்கள்
முனிவர்	- 95 பாடல்கள்
அரசர்	- 90 பாடல்கள்
அமைச்சர்	- 70 பாடல்கள்
வணிகர்	- 50 பாடல்கள்
வேளாளர்	- 30 பாடல்கள்

எனக் குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது.

இவற்றினை நோக்கும்பொழுது சோழர் காலத்தில் கவிதையாக்கமானது ஒரு நிலையில் சமூக அதிகார வரன் முறையுடன் தொடர்புபடுத்தப்பட்டு, அக்காலத்துநிலவிய சோதிடக் கருத்துக்கள் முதலானவற்றை உள்ளடக்கி நின்றது என்பது நன்கு புலனாகின்றது. இங்குக் கவிதையியல் சமூக அதிகார வரன் முறையால நிர்ணயிக்கப்படுகின்ற ஒரு தன்மையினை அவதானிக்கலாம்.

பல்வேறு பாடல் வகைகள் பட்டியல்படுத்தப்படுவதன் மூலம் புகழ்ச்சி முறையும் தரப்படுத்தப்படுவதை நாம் அவதானிக்கலாம். அதிகாரவரன்முறையுள்ள சமூகத்தின் தவிர்க்க முடியாப்பண்பு இது.

சோழராட்சிக் காலத்தின் பின்கூறு முதல் தமிழ்நாட்டில் ஏற்படும் பிரபுத்துவ வளர்ச்சியுடன் இந்தக்கவிதையியற் பண்பு இணைத்து நோக்கப்பட வேண்டுவது அவசியமாகும்.

இப்பாட்டியல் நூல்களை நாம் புலவர்களுக்கான கைந்நூல்களாகவே கொள்ளவேண்டும்.

இவ்வாறு நோக்கும்பொழுது அக்காலத்திற் புலமை எவ்வாறு நோக்கப் பட்டது, கவிஞர் என்போர் எவ்வாறு கண்டறியப்பட்டனர் எனும் விடயங்கள் முக்கியமாகின்றன. அவ்வகையில் வெண்பாப்பாட்டியல் தரும் தகவல்கள் மிக முக்கியமானவையாகும்.

முதல்நிலையில் புலவர் (புலமையுடையோர்) நான்கு நிலைப்பட வகுக்கப்பட்டனர்.

கவி - கவிஞன்

கமகன் - எந்நூலுக்கும் பொருள் விரிக்ககூடிய அறிஞன்

வாதி - தான் எடுத்துக்கொண்டதை தனது வாதத்தினால் நிலைநிறுத்தக் கூடியவன்

வாக்கி - அறம்பொருள் இன்பம், வீடு ஆகிய நாற்பொருட் பயனையும் கேட்போர் விரும்ப இனியன கூறும் ஆற்றலுடையவன்.

கவிஞர் பின்வரும் முறையில் வகுக்கப்பட்டிருந்தனர்.

ஆசுகவி - 'இவ்வெழுத்தாலே பாடுக, இச்சொல்லாலே பாடுக, இப்பொருளாலே பாடுக, இவ்வாய்பாட்டாலே பாடுக, இவ்வலங்காரத்தாலே பாடுக என்றொருவன் சொன்ன

உள்ளுரைக்கு அவன் எதிரே பாடப்படுவது ஆசுவியாகும்'.

மதுரகவி - 'ஓசையும் பொருளுமினிதாய் முழுதுஞ் சொல்லாய் அலங்காரமும் தொடையும் தெற்றென்று கேட்டார் துதிக்கும்படி பாடுவது...'

சித்திரகவி - 'மாலைமாற்று, சக்கரம், சுழிகுளம், ஏகபாதம் எழுகூற்றிருக்கை, காதைகரப்பு, கரந்துறைப்பாட்டு, தூசங்கொள்ளல், வாவனாற்றி, கூடசதுக்கம், கோமூத்திரி, ஓரெழுத்துப்பா, வல்லினப்பாட்டு, மெல்லினப்பாட்டு, இடையினப்பாட்டு, சித்திரக்கா, விசித்திரக்கா, வித்தாரக்கா, விகற்படநடை, வினாவுத்தரம, கருப்பதோபாத்திரம் எழுத்துருவத்தனை, நாகபந்தம், முரசபந்தம், நீரோட்டகம், சித்து, ஒரு பொருட்பாட்டு, பல பொருட்பாட்டு, மாத்திரைப பெருக்கம், மாத்திரைச் சுருக்கம், எழுத்துப் பெருக்கம், எழுத்துச் சுருக்கம், இன்னனு பிறவுமாகிய பல விகறபததாற் செய்யப்பட்டு ஓசை கெடாமல், எழுத்துக்குற்றம், சொற்குற்றம், பொருட்குறறம், யாப்புக்குற்றம், அலங்காரக் குற்றம் என்னும் குறறங்கள் படாமல் பாடபபடுங்கவி சித்திரக்கவியாகும்.

சிததாரகவி - (இவர்கள் அகலக்கவி எனப்படுவர்). பல செய்யுடகள் கூடிவந்த தொடர்நிலைச் செய்யுளும் அடிபலவாய் நடக்கும் தனிப்பாச் செய்யுளும் என்னும் இரு அமிசமும் அகலக் கவியாம.

வச்சிணந்தி மாலை என்னும் மெய்பாப்பாட்டியலில் தரப்படும் இவ்விளக்கஙகளை நோக்கும் பொழுது புலமைத்தொழில் எவ்வெவ் விடயங்களை உள்ளடக்கி நின்றதென்பதும், அவற்றுக்குள் கவியாக்கம் எவ்வாறு கருதப்பட்டது என்பதும் தெரியவருகின்றது. இநதவகுப்பின்படி ஆசுகவி, சித்திரக்கவி, சித்தாரக்கவிக்குரிய இடஅமைவு முக்கியத்துவம் விரிந்த நூலைப் பாடும் (அகலக்கவி) புலவனுக்கிருக்கவில்லை என்பது தெரிகின்றது. செய்யுளின் ஆற்றுகைக்கே (performance) இங்கு முதலிடம் கொடுக்கப்படு கின்றது என்ற உண்மையையும் அவதானிக்கத் தவறக்கூடாது.

இவ்வாறு நோக்கும்பொழுது இன்னுமொரு முக்கியமான உண்மையும் தெரியவருகிறது. பாட்டியல் நூல்கள் கூறும் கவிதை மரபானது புலவர் உறவினை முக்கியப்படுத்துவதாக அமைவதை அவதானிக்கலாம். அதாவது பாடப்படுபவர் நோக்கிலே செய்யுள் அமையும் நிலை இத்தகைய ஒரு சூழலில் 'ஆன்றவிந்தடங்கிய' புலமை மரபு அதிகம் முக்கியப்படுத்தப்படாது விடப்படலாம்.

இந்த உண்மை புன்கவிகள்யார் என்று [redacted]ப்படுவதன் மூலமும் தெரிய வருகின்றது

> ஆறொருவன் பாக்களை ஆங்கொருவனுக்களிப்போன்
> சோரகவி சார்த்தொலியற் சொல்லும் அவன் - சீரிலாப்
> பிள்ளைக்கவி சிறந்த பின்மொழிக்காக புன்மொழிக்காம்
> வெள்ளைக்கவனின் வேறு.

(ஒருவன் பாட்டை மற்றொருவனுக்குக் கொடுப்போன் கள்ளக் கவியாகும். ஒருவன் கவியிசையில் வேறொரு செய்யுட புணர்ப்போன் சார்த்துகவியாம். தனக்கென ஒன்றின்றி முன்னோர் மொழிந்த சொன்னடை பொருணடை கண்டு கவிபாடுவோன் பிள்ளைக் கவியாம். புன்மொழிகளாலொன்று கவிபாடுவோன் வெள்ளைக் கவியாகும்).

கவிஞர்களது தொழிற்பாட்டை விதிமுறை இலக்கணமாக எடுத்துக் கூறுமளவுக்கு இந்த இலக்கண நூல்கள் அமைகின்றன. இந்தச் செல்நெறியின் வளர்ச்சியே பின்னர் இன்ன இன்னவற்றுக்கு இன்ன இன்ன உவமைகள் பயன்படுத்தப்பட வேண்டுமென்ற இலக்கிய மரபினை இலக்கண விதியாக மாற்றியமைக்கின்ற தெனலாம். உவமான சங்கிரகம் போன்ற நூல்களில் இப்பண்பைக் காணலாம்.

கி.பி 12-ம் நூற்றாண்டுக்குப் பின்னர் தோன்றிய இலக்கியங்களின் பின்னணியில் பாட்டியல் நூல்கள் தரும் தகவல்களைப் பார்க்கும்பொழுது, இச்செல்நெறி ஒரு குறிபபிட்ட சமூக மட்டத்தையே சார்ந்தது என்பதை அறிந்து கொள்ளலாம். சோழர் காலத்திற் கோயிற் பண்பாட்டையே களமாகக் கொண்டு இலக்கியச் செயற்பாடுகள் அமைந்திருந்தன. கோயில் அரணமனைக்கும் வழிபாட்டிடத்துக்கும் பொதுச் சொல்லாகும். மத நிலைப்படைப்பாக்க உந்துதல் மதுரகவி, அகலக்கவி நிலைகளிலேயே இடம்பெறும். அரசவை மரபிலேயே சித்திரக்கவி, ஆசுகவி என்பன முதன்மை பெறும். எனவே பாட்டியல் கூறும் கவிப்பயில்வுமரபு அரச, பிரபுத்துவக் குழுமமட்டத்திலேயே பெரிதும் நிகழ்ந்திருத்தல் வேண்டும்.

அத்துடன், புலமை என்பது ஒரு சிறப்புத் தொழிற்பிரிவாகக் காணப்படும் ஒரு நிலைமையும் (specialised labour skill) இந்தக் குறிப்புக்கள் மூலம் தெரிய வருகின்றன.

இத்தகைய சூழலில் கவிதையாக்கம் என்பது பொருளைக் கூட

உருவ நிலை நின்று பார்க்கும் ஒரு தன்மையையே வளர்க்கின்றது. செய்யுள் யாப்பு, அணி பற்றிய விடயமாகி விடுகிறது.

VII

தமிழில் கவிதையாக்கம் பற்றிய புலமை விளக்க முயற்சிகளில் செய்யுளாக்கமே யாபபுப்பற்றிய அறிவே முக்கியமாக எடுத்துப் பேசப்பட்டுவந்துள்ளது.

தொல்காப்பியம் செய்யுளியல் செய்யுளின் அமைப்பு முதல் அழகியலம்சங்கள் வரை கூறுகின்றது. அங்கு 'யாப்பு' எனப்படுவதற்குத் தரப்படும் விளக்கம் மிகத் தெளிவானதாகும்.

'எழுத்து முதலா ஈண்டிய அடியின்
குறித்த பொருளை முடிய நாட்டல்
யாப்பு என மொழிப - யாப்பு அறி புலவர்' (செய் 75)

யாப்பு என்பது ஆக்கப்படும் முறைமையேயாகும். செய்யுளியல் தொடர்ந்து செய்யுளாக்கத்தின் புலமைத் தொழிற்பாடுகள் முழுவதையும் விளக்கி, ஆக்கங்களின் வகைகளை அடிவரைவுள்ளன, அடிவரைவற்றன என வகுத்து, அதன்மேல் பாத்திரங்கள், கிளவிகள் பற்றிப்பேசி, இறுதியில் செய்யுள்வனப்புகள் பற்றிப் பேசும். அம்மை, அழகு, தொன்மை, தோல், விருந்து, இயைபு, புலன், இழைபு என்பன தொல்காப்பியம் கூறும் வனப்புகளாம். ஆக்கத்தின் அக உருவாக்கம் பற்றிச் செய்யுள் உறுப்புக்கள் விளக்க, வனப்பு படைப்பின் அமைப்பொழுங்கை வற்புறுத்துவதாகும். தொல்காப்பியர் உவமவியல் என்பாரே தவிர 'அணியியல்' என ஓர் இயலை வகுக்கவில்லை.

தொல்காப்பியர் புறநிலையாக நின்று, தமிழ்ச் செய்யுளாக்கத்தின் அமைப்பு, பண்புகளைத் தெளிவுபடுத்தி அறிமுகம் செய்ய, செய்யுளாக்கம் பற்றிய கருத்து வரும் நூல்கள் ஆக்கமுறைமை என்னும் வட்டத்துள் நின்று கொண்டு செய்யுளின் ஆக்கப்பாட்டு முறைமையை விளக்குகின்றன. யாப்பருங்கலம் செய்யுளாக்கத்தை இந்த முறையிலேயே நோக்குகின்றது. யாப்புப் பற்றிய முதற் சூத்திரத்திலேயே இந்த அழுத்த வேறுபாட்டை அவதானிக்கலாம்.

'எழுத்தசை சீர்தளை அடி தொடை தூக்கொடு
இழுக்கா நடையது யாப்பு எனப்படுமே'

இதனை யாப்புப்பற்றிய தொல்காப்பிய விளக்கத்துடன் இணைத்து நோக்கல் அவசியமாகும். யாப்பருங்கலம் செய்யுளியற்றுவோன் நிலைநிற்கின்றது எனலாம்.

இந்த நோக்கு செய்யுளை யாப்பு - அணி என இரண்டு நிலைப்பட வைத்துப் பார்க்கும் மரபினை ஏற்படுத்தி விடுகிறது.

'அணி' என்பது வடமொழியில் வரும் அலங்காரம் என்பதன் தமிழ்ப் பெயர்ப்பாகும். செய்யுளின் அமைப்பினுள்ளேயே அதன் அழகு உள்ளது என்ற கருத்து இங்கு மறுதலிக்கப்படுகின்றது.

> செய்யுள் பற்றிய நன்னூல் விளக்கம் மிக முக்கியமானதாகும்,
> 'பல்வகைத்தாதுவின் உயிர்க்கு உடல்போல், பல
> சொல்லால், பொருட்கு இடனாக, உணர்வின்
> வல்லோர் அணி பெறச் செய்வன செய்யுள்' (நன்னூல் 268)

'தோல், இரத்தம், இறைச்சி, மேதை, எலும்பு, மச்சை, சுவேத நீரென்னும் எழுவகைத் தாதுக்களினாலும் உயிர்க்கிடனாக இயற்றப்பட்ட உடம்பு போல், இயற்சொல், திரிசொல், திசைச்சொல், வடசொல் என்னும் நால்வகைச் சொற்களால், பொருட்கிடனாகக் கல்வியறிவினால் செய்யுளியற்ற வல்லோர் அலங்காரம் பெற இயற்றுவன செய்யுளாம். - சிவஞான முனிவர்

தொல்காப்பியர் காலத்திற் செய்யுள் பற்றியிருந்த நோக்குக்கும் கி.பி. 12-ம் நூற்றாண்டளவில் செய்யுள் பற்றி நிலவிய நோக்குக்குமுள்ள வேறுபாடு இந்த நூற்பாவில் நன்கு காட்டப்படுகின்றது. இந்தக்காலம் முதல் செய்யுள் என்பது யாப்பு, அணி என்ற இரு செயற்பாடுகளுக்கு இடம்கொடுக்கும் படைப்பாக்கம் எனும் கருத்து வலுப்பெறுகின்றது. இந்தக்கருத்து வலுப்பெற, தமிழின் இலக்கணப் பரப்பும் விரிவடையத் தொடங்குகின்றது. எழுத்து, சொல், பொருள் என்றிருந்த இலக்கண மரபு இப்பொழுது, யாப்பியலையும், அணியியலையும் சேர்த்துக் கொள்கிறது. இந்தக் கட்டத்திலிருந்து அணியிலக்கணம் தனியாகவே விரிவடையத் தொடங்குகின்றது.

இந்தப் பண்பு தமிழ்நாட்டுச் சிற்ப கட்டடக்கலைகளிலும் காணப்படுகின்றது. அலங்காரம் என்பது பயன்பாட்டு நிலைக்கு மேலான மிதமிஞ்சிய வேலைப்பாடு என்கின்ற நிலமையினைச் சிற்ப, கட்டடக்கலைகளிலும் காணலாம்.

அலங்காரம் கவிதையில் சப்தாலங்காரம், அர்த்தாலங்காரம் என மேலும் வேறுபடுத்திப் பார்க்கப்படுகின்றது.

இவ்வாறு கவிதை யாப்பு, அணியாகப் பார்க்கப்பட்டு இலக்கண விதிகளாக எடுத்துச் சொல்லப்படும் முறைமை 'இறுக்கத்'துடன் செல்லும். அதேவேளையில் அந்த முறைமையை மறுதலிக்கின்ற படைப்புக்கள் அடுத்துவரும் நூற்றாண்டுகளிலே தோன்றத் தொடங்குவதைக் காணலாம். குமரகுருபரர், தாயுமானவர், அபிராமபட்டர் ஆகியோரது கவிதைகளில் இந்த இலக்கண மயபபாட்டுககு எதிரான செல் நெறியொன்று வளரத்தொடங்குவதைக் காணலாம். சொல்லெளிமையும், பொருளழகும் பாடல்களின பண்பாக மேற்கிளம்புகின்றன.

இன்னொரு புறத்தில் அடிநிலை மக்களின் பாட்டோசைகள் - சிந்து, கண்ணி முதலியன படிப்படியாக மேற்கிளம்பத் தொடங்குகின்றன. இவையும் இலக்கண இறுக்கங்களைத் தவிர்ப்பவையாக அமைகின்றன. இந்த அணியிலக்கண இறுககங்கள் உயர்நிலைப்பட்ட செய்யுட்பயில்விலேயே காணப்படுகின்றன. அடிநிலை வெளிபபாடுகள் தெரிய வரவர, இநத இறுககங்கள் மாறுவதை அவதானிக்கலாம்

VIII

முடிப்புரையாக ஒன்றினைக் கூறுதல் வேண்டும். இந்த இறுக்கம் படிப்படியாக நெகிழத் தொடங்குகின்றது. அதற்கு இரண்டு காரணங்கள் உள்ளன.

1. பிறபண்பாட்டு வருகைகள்

குறிப்பாக இந்தியப்பண்பாட்டு வட்டத்துக்கு அப்பாலான செல்வாக்குகள்.

இஸ்லாம், கிறிஸ்தவம் மேனாட்டுச் சமூகத் தாக்கம்

2. அரசியல், சமூக, பொருளாதார மாற்றங்கள், வாழ்க்கைக் கண்ணோட்டங்களில் ஏற்படுத்திய மாற்றங்கள்.

இந்த மாற்றங்களுடன் இலக்கிய உற்பத்தி முறைமைகளில் பெருமாற்றங்கள் ஏற்படுகின்றன.

இநத மாற்றங்களின் வெளிப்பாடாக, இளங்கோ, கம்பனின் பின்னர் தமிழின் மூன்றாவது மகாகவிஞன் தோன்றுகிறான். காலமும் திறமையும் அவனிடத்திணைய அவன் நிறைந்த தன்னம்பிகையுட44ன்

புவியனைத்தும் போற்றிடவான் புகழ் படைத்துத்
தமிழ்மொழியைப் புகழிலேற்றும்
கவியரசர் தமிழ்நாட்டுக்கில்லையென்னும்
வசையென்னாற் கழிந்ததன்றே
'சுவை புதிது, பொருள் புதிது, வளம் புதிது
சொற்புதிது, சோதிமிக்க
நவகவிதை, எந்நாளுமழியாத
மகா கவிதை'யை...

தானாக்குவதாக அறைகூவல் விடுகின்றான். குமரகுருபரர் காலம்முதல் மாறிவந்த தமிழ்க்கவிதை பாரதியில் ஒரு திருப்புமுனையை எய்துகின்றது. அந்தத் திருப்புமுனையிலிருந்து, செல்வதுதான் புதுக்கவிதை. அது பாரதிக்குள் இருந்து பிறந்து தமிழை இருபத்தோராம் நூற்றாண்டுக்கு இட்டுச் செல்கின்றது.

இக்கட்டுரைப் பொருளை விவாதித்துதவிய திரு த சிவராமுக்கும், வாசித்துக் கருத்துக்கூறிய திரு க. சண்முகலிங்கத்துக்கும், தட்டச்சு உதவிபுரிந்த செல்வி சுகிர்தாவுக்கும் நன்றி.

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Rigid Grammaticalisations that 'hide' the inherent creativity of Tamil Poetics.

- Some comments on the Tamil poetics traditions as presented prescriptively from Tolkappiyam to the Pattiyal works.

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Tamil poetics is yet largely an unexplored field, with prosody having received more attention than poetics proper. Poetics in Tamil has not been discussed in the manner Aristotle did in poetics not as the sanskrit grammarians did for Rasa & Dvani.

The Tolkappiyam view of literature as one of "Created/ worked within" (Cey+ul) comes close to the concept of "poiesis" in Greek, but later grammarians tend to present a view of literature that is very sanskritic, not all too mindful of the creative tradition of Tamil poesy.

It is the aim of this paper to hightlight some of the unfortunate land marks wherein rigid grammaricalisation is unable to present fully the creative flow at work with in the Tamil tradition.

Tolkappaiyam does not define what akam is (it was left to the commentators), none the less it equates puram as the one that is exterior to akam. This equation raises many problems. While it is true that military characteristics of the land-based divisions correspond to the geography of the terrains as given in akam, taking "Pãtãn" (singing the glory of the male) and kãñci (transitoriness of the world) as puram of Kaikkilai (one sided love) and peruntinai (unequal Last) Sound too conceptual and is not in the same after as the land based four. In vãkai Tolkappiyar brings in too many generalisations unacceptable to the ethos of cankam warfare.

More importantly puram has no mutal, karu, and uri that

are characteristic of akam poetry.

In akam poetry the poet speaks as a character, whereas, *in puram the singer/poet is seen directly expressing. The latter is* "bardic"(Marr).

Above all *akam poetry is situational* and *relates* to the expression of one feeling, in one particular situation by one character. Except in ural kali there is no dialogue. This gives an episodic view of life and is unable to present life in its entirety. In puram the tradition is different. Ārruppaṭai provides a wide back drop.

The poetic richness of the available texts in which akam poems are used for political purposes and puram poems speak of the horrors of widowhood and war do not surface in this grammaticalized view.

Cilapatikaram, as it stands, constitute a logical development from the episodic/situational poetry to one which sees life *in its entirety* . *From one situation, one character,* one feeling of the akam poems, in Cilapatikaram we come to one vital (crucial) aspect and seeing the entire life in terms of that. Through cilampu (the anklet) *is seen the entire life story of three persons.* Ilanko takes off from cankam poetics and creates a new trend of poetry which was soon taken over by the sanskrit epics.

It is significant that the whole genre of Bhakti (devotional) poetry, an important contribution to Indian poetry as a whole is not discussed in works on Tamil poetry-making. The absence of references to devotional literatures in the commentarial tradition relating to literature and grammar (thus the vaisnava tradition of theological commentary is not taken count of) raises the question whether the devotional poetry was considered "literature" *at the time they were produced.* Compilation of devotional poems seems to have gone a long way in countering these literary outputs retrospectively. Personalizing the relationship with the workshipped deity *in terms of existing social relationship* (husband/wife, master/servant, father/son. Friend to friend) led to a great change in Tamil poetic traditions, which has not been discussed in the grammatical works on poetry making. This leads

to some confusion when we come to deal with the two great works in Tamil-Ramayanam & Periyapuranam.

The grammaticalisation done in Tantialankāram fits in with the kavya of the Sanskrit mould. The grammars dealing with "major literature" (pēr ilakkiyam) are unable to accommodate fully the itihasa-based, bhakti inspired Kambaramayanam and the purana-related indigenous history of Tiruttontar Purānam of Cekkilar.

The itihasa, purana classification has no relevancy to assess these literatures. Cilappatikaram the earlier narrative epic strikes a specific Tamil idiom in epic making. It should not be forgotten that after Cilappatikaram, the narrative epic form was used to discuss theology and religious philosophy. Jaina & Buddhist traditions dominate early epic poetry. All that is told of the poetics of this major works is that they are poems of great width - akalakkavi.

This brings us to the tradition of poetry making mentioned in the pattiyal works of 12th century (Pannirupattiyal, Venpappattiyal and works thereafter). In these works emphasis is made on how to make proper poetry taking into count hierarchial distinctions and astrological specificities. This tradition speaks of auspicious letters for initial words in a poem, the division of letters on the basis of their caste- hierarchy the quantum of verses in each of the genres for people from different castes. The social significance of those prescriptions for poetry/verse making should be inquired into. The pattiyal tradition is the literary expression of the emergence of regional aristocracies and local chief tancies, characteristic of post-13th century Tamil nadu history. These prescriptions are a far cry from the creative leaps that were made in the late medieval period.

Study of poetry in Tamil has been confined to extensive studies of yāppu (composition) and ani (alamkara - art of beautifying) The structural aspect of Tamil verse composition have been thoroughly inquired into from the time of Tolkappiyar. But with yapparunkalam a medieval work the tendancy for grammaticalisation increases. The extensive emphasis on composition and the alamkaras show that verse making has become

a specialised art. The relationship of literature produced to the socio political needs of those inauthority is very clear. A bird's eye view of contemporary literatures (13th - 18th century) shows that literary development was proceeding on more truly creative lines. The works of Kumarakuru Parar, Arunakiri and Tayumanavar are important. As time went on there was also conscious tapping of the folk traditions. On the other hand poetry was also becoming metaphysical (Siddha) . The convey of Christianity and Islam changed the idioms of poetic expression.

It is the coming together of all these creative impulses, which gives us Subramania Bharati, through whom we notice a further development in Tamil poetics. 'New Poetry' of Tamil has ushered in a sense of universalism and internationalism into Tamil literature.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TAMIL RESEARCH

உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சிக் கழகம்